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ABSTRACT

This study continued the evaluation of the Collaborative Coaching and Learning (CCL) initiative in Effective Practice (EP) Schools in the Boston Public Schools, Massachusetts by examining the practices and outcomes of the second year. First year data led evaluators to conclude that the CCL model was basically sound and that it showed promise for the improvement of teaching and learning. The evaluation in the second year focused on professional development coaches and teachers do to improve the implementation of the Readers' and Writers' Workshop. For the evaluation, researchers observed 8 laboratory sites and interviewed 39 teachers, principals, and coaches. The findings from year 2 indicate that CCL is still seen as a valuable model of teacher professional development, a model in which teachers have the opportunity to improve their teaching by learning from and with their coach and colleague teachers. In the second year, teachers had a greater voice in determining the focus of the cycle's work than they had in the first year. Teachers' ability to reflect on their own and each other's work deepened. However, findings are mixed with respect to the extent to which teachers were willing to take on the responsibility for demonstrating during their cycles, and there is resistance to hosting program study in some lab sites. Many more teachers participated over all in year 2. The issues identified as important in the first year remain important in the second year. (SLD)

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Year II of Collaborative Coaching and Learning in the Effective Practice Schools:

Expanding the Work

Written By

Barbara Neufeld and Dana Roper

July 2003

Education Matters, Inc.
Cambridge, MA

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INTRODUCTION

At the end of the first year of CCL implementation, Education Matters' concluded that Effective Practice (EP) schools accomplished a great deal with CCL in its first year and that the model showed great promise for the improvement of teaching and learning and for the further development of high quality, instructionally focused cultures in the EP schools. Our data led us to conclude that the model was basically sound and that teachers and principals valued what it was contributing to instructional improvement at their schools. We described the ways in which schools had adapted the model noting that some adaptations worked better than others but that local variations would always be necessary in light of specific school contexts.

Without question, the commitment of teachers, principals and coaches was essential to the accomplishments of the first year of CCL. Although not everyone was eager to embrace the new approach to coaching, our data revealed that teachers, for the most part, accepted the new model of coaching and its demands, tried it out, and concluded that it had a great deal to offer. Teachers, by their willingness to take on this new approach to professional development, made clear their commitment to whole-school improvement and improved student achievement. Coaches, too, took on a challenging role when they agreed to implement CCL. They worked harder than ever before and confronted a new and more complex set of challenges. But they, like the teachers, demonstrated their commitment to the model and their conviction that the payoff for all of the hard work would be improved instruction and, ultimately, increased student learning.

Finally, none of the work would have gone forward without the pivotal contribution of principals. As we wrote in our Year I report, no matter how well CCL was designed, and no matter how willing the teachers and talented the coaches, without the principals' skill and commitment to this work there would have been little implementation of the CCL model. Principals contributed substantial time to scheduling, designing and participating in lab-sites. Some even took the risk of demonstrating a workshop strategy in front of their teachers. They supported the coaches in their efforts to make the district's emphasis on Readers' and Writers' Workshop a priority. Principals worked as part of a team with teachers, coaches, and the BPE to make the first year of CCL successful. By the end of the first year of implementation, most of the structures and processes associated with CCL were in place and, for the most part, teachers were eager to participate in CCL during the 2002-2003 school year.

But, successful as it was, Year I of implementation also illuminated components of CCL that needed further improvement, areas that the BPE and the coaches worked to strengthen during the 2002-2003 school year.

- First, during the second year of implementation, the BPE wanted to see teachers take a more direct role in identifying the areas of instruction on which they wanted to focus and, the BPE wanted those areas to be connected to the schools' professional development needs as written into the schools' WSIPs. This would be in contrast to the first year experience where, for the most part, principals and coaches chose the lab-sites and identified their courses of study.

- Second, the BPE wanted Year II to result in a deepening of teachers' ability to reflect on their own and each other's work. During the debriefs in Year I, for example, teachers tended to praise the demonstrations implemented by their colleagues regardless of the quality of those demonstrations. Coaches too, withheld critical comments during the debriefs fearing that they would antagonize teachers and lose their trust if they asked critical questions about aspects of a teacher-demonstrated lesson. As a result, coaches and the staff of the BPE realized that they were, as yet, unable to push teachers to deeper levels of reflection in their teaching.

- Third, coaches, along with principals, wanted to develop among teachers the expectation that they would demonstrate teaching strategies and engage in serious discussions about instruction with their colleagues during the cycle. When teachers resisted active participation in the cycles, often they had not yet learned that they could glean valuable knowledge from reflecting on their own and their colleagues' practices. Nor had they learned that the components of a cycle would be safe, non-evaluative learning contexts.

- Fourth, there was a need to better link a) the parts of Workshop teaching as they were modeled during the lab-sites, and b) the components of the CCL model itself – the focus of the inquiry with the lab-site work and then with the debrief and classroom follow-up. Better linkage in both of these areas was needed to ensure the coherence and, therefore, impact of the cycles.

With the first year's success in mind as well as the goals for the second year as articulated by the BPE, during the winter and spring of the 2002-2003 school year, Education Matters' researchers observed eight lab-sites and their associated inquiry and debrief sessions and interviewed a total of 39 teachers, principals, and coaches.[1] We did this in order to collect data that would enable us to focus on the issues that concerned the BPE as well as learn about the successes and challenges still facing the schools. This report is based on an analysis of the interview and observation data as well as on a consideration of the discussions of CCL that occurred during the EP principals' Network meetings.

What did we learn in Year II? In general terms, we learned that CCL is still seen as a valuable model of teacher professional development, a model in which teachers have the opportunity to improve their teaching by learning from and with their coach and colleague teachers.

With respect to the areas in which the BPE wanted to see progress, we learned the following:

- First, without question, teachers in the second year of CCL implementation had a greater voice in determining the focus of the cycle's work than they had during the first year. As a result, at least some teachers in these cycles truly took ownership of their learning. They not only identified the focus of their CCL cycle but used what they learned during a cycle to identify the focus of subsequent cycles. Such teachers expressed the opinion that the fundamental work of reflecting on practice should be a part of every teacher's ongoing professional development.

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[1] Our sample of teachers included mainstream as well as special education and bilingual teachers from across the grade levels in the sample.

- Second, we saw progress with respect to the deepening of teachers' ability to reflect on their own and each other's work. In some instances, this deepening was profound, as we will describe below. In others, although the change might be considered small were there a rubric with which to assess it, in our view these small changes were significant – teachers who had been unwilling to talk with colleagues about instruction were now actively participating in discussions about how to go about teaching a specific reading strategy, for example. In almost all cases, the evidence for deeper reflection appeared during inquiry sessions rather than during debriefs. For the most part, debriefs continued to be sessions in which teachers gave and received positive feedback on their work. Coaches reported that they still found it difficult to provide thought-provoking feedback to teachers during debriefs because they feared alienating teachers by appearing to be evaluating their work.

- Third, the findings are mixed with respect to the extent to which teachers were willing to take on the responsibility for demonstrating during their cycles. All but a few of the teachers who had been willing to host during Year I continued to value and participate in this component of their cycle's work.[2] In three of the lab-sites we observed, teachers who had been unwilling to host in Year I were persuaded to take on this role in Year II. In only one of these cycles, however, did teachers report that demonstrating was a valuable experience. Strong resistance to demonstrating continued in a couple of lab-sites despite the coaches' and principals' best efforts to encourage teachers to take on this work.

- Fourth, as a result of principals' and teachers' efforts, and as a result of the increased coaching support provided to large schools, many more teachers participated in cycles during Year II. Indeed, by the end of the 2002-2003 school year, almost all classroom teachers in the elementary schools and ELA teachers in the middle schools had participated in one or more cycles.[3] However, with many more teachers participating in cycles in Year II, the issue of teacher resistance became increasingly difficult to avoid. Teachers who were able to avoid CCL participation in Year I were encouraged by principals, coaches, and in some cases peers, to participate in Year II. Many of these individuals, who had to be strongly persuaded to participate in a cycle, continued to question the fundamental premises of the CCL model before, during, and after their participation in the cycle.[4] Participation, direct experience with CCL in other words, did not always lead to commitment to the coaching model. On the other hand, some of the teachers who participated in CCL in Year II because more cycles were available to the school a) were willing to take on the role of demonstrating teacher and b) found the experience rewarding.

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[2] Teachers who do the demonstration teaching in a lab-site are called its "hosts."

[3] At the middle school level, teachers in other core content areas participated as well because the middle schools in our sample stressed the importance of literacy across the curriculum.

- Fifth, there was **only slight** improvement in the links between a) the parts of Workshop teaching as they were modeled during the lab-site, and b) the components of the CCL model itself as demonstrated in the eight lab-sites we observed. The BPE and the coaches made efforts to better connect the parts of both Workshop and CCL, but in most schools, during most cycles, according to coaches and Education Matters' observations, the parts remained unconnected or only loosely connected.

These findings lead us to conclude that the issues the BPE identified as being important at the end of Year I remained important throughout Year II – deepening teachers' ability to reflect on their work, tightening the links between components of Workshop and CCL, clarifying the expectations about teachers' participation in the cycle and increasing teachers' ownership of the work. The BPE's and the schools' efforts to address these issues met with some success during the 2002-2003 school year, particularly with regards to increasing teachers' ownership of their professional development work and the deepening of teachers' reflection about their practice. As a result of the findings for Year II of CCL, Education Matters remains confident that the model is a promising one for teacher professional development and is worth the considerable effort the EP schools have devoted to this work in the last two years.

In order to explore these findings in greater detail, we focus on three topics. First, we consider the actual implementation of the CCL model, giving attention to how the course of study is chosen, how pre-conferences are held, who hosts the lab-sites, how workshop components are implemented, and how the debrief and inquiry sessions are conducted. In presenting these implementation findings, we discuss variations in implementation and the reasons teachers and coaches provide for the way the work has developed in their cycles.

Next, in light of the implementation findings we consider the impact the CCL has had in Year II on the schools' collaborative cultures, teachers' ownership of the work, their ability to reflect on their own and their colleagues' practice, and the transfer of what is learned in CCL to teachers' classroom instruction.

In the final section, we draw together what we have learned about CCL implementation and consider the factors that have influenced our findings and the challenges that remain. This discussion includes attention to a) the extent of teachers' knowledge of Readers' and Writers' Workshop, b) teachers' sense of confidence in their own work and its relation to their fear of demonstrating in front of colleagues, c) the presence or absence of teacher leaders in the schools, and d) the roles that coaches and principals take with teachers.

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[4] No teachers were required to participate in a cycle and some, indeed, with the agreement of the principal, participated in other forms of professional development.

IMPLEMENTING COLLABORATIVE COACHING AND LEARNING

In reporting on the implementation of CCL during Year II, we begin by noting that CCL continues to be implemented and, for the most part, well-regarded by teachers, principals and coaches. Second, during Year II more teachers in each of the sample schools participated in at least one cycle and many participated in two or more cycles. Third, the major variations that we described in Year I continued in Year II: a) principals differed in how and whether they participated in the lab-sites; b) lab-sites varied with respect to whether there was a host-teacher classroom and whether teachers were willing to demonstrate in front of their colleagues; and c) the work that teachers were able to do in the cycles varied depending on how knowledgeable they were about Readers' and Writers' Workshop – those with more knowledge and experience were able to go deeper in their learning than those who were fairly new to this instructional approach. Fourth, coaches still found it difficult to get teachers to speak critically during debriefs about the lab-site instruction.

But fifth, teachers in a few cycles demonstrated much greater ability to reflect on and be thoughtful about their instruction than in the first year of implementation. This greater reflection and analysis tended to take place during inquiry groups and involved teachers in making links between their professional literature and their practice. Additionally, inquiry sessions provided a venue in which teachers began to identify ways in which their work had implications within and across grade-levels in their schools. These findings suggest that CCL in Year II is a) deepening teachers' ability to reflect on and then improve their practice and b) contributing to the development of collegial, instructionally focused school cultures that are at the heart of Boston's theory of whole-school improvement. These findings reinforce the value of allocating time in which teachers, have the opportunity to make formal inquiry into instructional practice.

In light of these findings, we focus this implementation section on the evidence that leads us to these conclusions about areas of growth. We offer multiple examples of what we construe as growth in order to give readers an opportunity to consider whether such growth is, indeed, evidence of the impact of CCL. However, we also describe areas in which continuity rather than growth seems evident. We do this to remind readers of components of the coaching model that are in need of further attention.[5]

Before describing the ways in which CCL was implemented in the eight lab-sites we studied, we want to review the formal design of a cycle as developed by the BPE. According to the BPE's publication, *Getting Started with CCL*[6], the first part of an eight-week cycle should involve participating teachers working with the coach "to define what they want to study together," the course of study. For example, in literacy, "the course of study can be an element of Readers' or Writers' Workshops – the architecture of a mini-lesson, for example, or how to confer with students – or a Workshop strategy about which the teachers want to learn more, such as a genre study." (p.5) The course of study leads teachers to develop one or more questions that will then guide their work during inquiry time and classroom demonstrations.

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[5] Although we have studied lab-sites within a set of schools, in order to preserve the identity of the schools, we present our data and conclusions with respect to the set of lab-sites.

[6] This document is available at www.bpe.org .

The classroom-based work associated with a cycle has three components: the pre-conference, a demonstration lesson, and a debrief. According to the BPE, the pre-conference should be scheduled immediately before the demonstration and last for about fifteen minutes. The pre-conference is an opportunity for the coach and teachers to "*confirm planning already done* [emphasis added] in the debrief of a previous demonstration, during inquiry sessions, or in one-on-one meetings." The demonstration "showcases a skill, strategy, or technique that teachers have been studying in inquiry," and tends to last for 30-60 minutes. The debrief, which should last for 20-30 minutes is best scheduled immediately after the demonstration. It is "time set aside for the teachers and coach to review and analyze the demonstration lesson they have observed. It is also the time for teachers to commit to introducing those strategies in their own classrooms in the coming week as well as to plan the next demonstration lesson." (p.10)

During and after the cycle, the coach helps individual teachers as they implement the strategies that are the focus of the inquiry and have been modeled in the demonstration lessons. Coach support is individualized in light of the teachers' and students' needs.

Within this formal design, principals, teachers and coaches continue to vary considerably in how they choose to implement the various components of CCL. Some lab-site groups have found highly effective implementation strategies in which the CCL components happen consistently and are tightly linked to one another. Other lab-site groups have struggled to schedule adequate meeting time for teachers or have been unable to coordinate the focus of teachers' inquiry with the demonstrations that occur during the lab-sites. Our findings suggest that teachers are more likely to value their CCL participation when the components – the pre-conference, lab-site, debrief, and inquiry all happen on a regularly scheduled basis and when they all focus around the same instructional issue. The importance of such coherence to the success of a cycle is paramount and should serve as a reminder that the basic design of CCL is sound.

Creating a Course of Study and Finding a Focus for Inquiry. During the first year of CCL, it was often the principal and/or coach who determined the cycle's course of study and inquiry focus. This made sense since the coaching model as well as Readers' and Writers' Workshop were new to most teachers and they needed an introduction to and experience with the instructional approach before they would be able to choose an appropriate focus for their professional development. In contrast, in Year II, many teachers in our sample were quite articulate in describing the ways in which they, in consultation with their coaches, were actively involved in the selection of the focus of their inquiry and course of study. Such teachers a) were explicit about what they wanted to learn, b) valued their authority to choose the focus of their professional development, c) expressed ownership of their work, and d) identified the important role of the coach – and sometimes the principal – in drawing out their interests and concerns.

> At the very first meeting, it made sense. [The coach] was talking sense. She was talking about going into the classroom. She was talking about our needs, and meeting our needs and our questions as teachers in this program. And she didn't come with a pre-set agenda. It was based on [the question]: what are the needs these teachers have? Teacher R [7]
>
> I guess kind of the initial inquiry, talking with [the coach] about what my needs were [as a math teacher] and how she could help, I realized that if there is anything that we're kind of weak in, it's [the reading and writing] part of it. So yes, I feel like I was part of that decision. Teacher F
>
> I wanted this focus [on comprehension] because I wanted to know how I could help these children to understand. I wanted them to have comprehension, and I needed to know more about it in order to help them. Teacher D
>
> The topic was discussed among all of us, and [the principal] would also say what she thought from her observations when she comes around to the classrooms and sees different things that are going on. And, she was right along with us, that it was guided reading that we had to concentrate on. Teacher T

Coaches took into account the needs of the specific teachers with whom they were working but, in addition, some inquiries and cycles were influenced by an analysis of the school's data and its implications for professional development. One coach described how a cycle in which she worked was formed in light of school-level data as well as teachers' interests and concerns.

> [The focus on reading] came from looking at the data last year when we did our WSIP and were looking at DRA scores. We've had a lot of repeaters in grade one and then they go on to grade two. We're not seeing our DRA scores where we'd like them to be. So in the WSIP we targeted grade two for our cycle with Readers' Workshop. At a grade two meeting prior to our first inquiry, I talked with the teachers and asked them to consider what within the Readers' Workshop they might want to study and learn more about, and I gave possible suggestions that they could look at the process: they could look at the Readers' Workshop itself, at the structure of the mini-lesson, at Read Alouds, at independent reading. So there are a variety of things you could do with Readers' Workshop. But they agreed, and they've said this before, that they're interested in the children, in knowing what the children do when they read, and also in their understanding [of what they read]. Because often they find students who are decoding, but then you

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[7] Throughout this paper, in a further effort to mask the identity of individuals, we use "she" in referring to all principals, teachers and coaches. There were, however, both men and women in our sample. We have also used letters to replace real names.

> go to engage in a conversation with them, and they're not able to get into a full conversation. And that's basically how the topic came about. Coach A

In this cycle, the coach was able to meld the school's data with the teachers' interests so that both were addressed.

Finding a focus for the inquiry portion of CCL was more difficult when teachers were unfamiliar with either Readers' or Writers' Workshop or when the cycle included teachers with a wide range of understanding of these literacy strategies. As in Year I, when teachers were unfamiliar with Workshop strategies, their first goal was to get an overview of what each of the components – mini-lessons, independent reading, guided reading, for example – looked like in practice.[8] Cycles that were designed to meet these teachers' needs were, of course, less finely-focused as inquiry topics than were the cycles that included teachers who already understood the structural basics of the literacy model. Cycles that included teachers with very different levels of knowledge and skill, presented coaches with the challenge of meeting all of their "learners'" needs. To do this, coaches attempted to focus on the broad issues of the less experienced teachers during the lab-site while focusing on teacher-identified issues with the more knowledgeable teachers during individual coaching sessions.

Having decided on a focus for their inquiry, some groups developed specific questions to address in their inquiry while others were less formal in specifying the focus. On the formal end, for example, teachers in one cycle in our sample organized to address the following questions:

- How do we [teachers] recognize, know, comprehension?
- What are students thinking about when they are reading or you are reading aloud?

Another group of teaches focused on learning more about:

- How do students utilize the reading and writing process when answering reflective questions in math?
- What writing skills are needed to answer reflective questions in math?

And still another group worked to answer the following questions:

- How do we develop a unit of study for the Writers' Workshop curriculum?
- How, within the Writers' Workshop, do we support the writing process with respect to poetry?
- How does the Writers' Workshop provide a teaching and learning environment that matches what we know about how people learn?

Such questions reveal the variation with which inquiries focused on teacher learning, student learning, or both.

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[8] Some teachers felt that they still needed a broad view of Workshop as a set of strategies even though they had been involved in cycles during the previous (2001-2002) school year.

In contrast to these focused inquiries, some CCL groups organized around a broad focus and coaches tried to refine the topic during the eight-week cycle. Such a CCL group, for example, might begin with a focus on Writers' Workshop and then narrow itself to a focus on generating and using "seed" ideas in the students' Writers' Notebooks. However, some cycles that began with a broad focus were not able to narrow their attention and, as a result, found themselves attending to different topics each week in light of what specific teachers wanted to address in their own classrooms. The demonstration lessons, in other words, drove all aspects of the lab-site work including the inquiry. While one could imagine some benefit in having a cycle that responded to immediate issues, rather than having teachers work collaboratively on a common inquiry, at least some teachers in cycles such as these realized that the absence of an inquiry focus left them drifting from week to week.

What do teachers do during inquiry sessions? When teachers come together during an inquiry session, they say that they are likely to discuss a piece of professional literature that they have read in light of their cycle's focus. These discussions, led by the coach, are not merely reviews of the content of the readings. Rather, at their best, they are structured conversations that link professional readings to teachers' work in the lab-sites and in their own classrooms.

Because this kind of conversation is rare in schools, and because it is in the inquiry component of CCL that we have seen the most significant growth since Year I, we now present a description of an inquiry group that demonstrates the ways in which teachers are a) engaged with the topic of their inquiry because it is meaningful to them, b) deepening their understanding of their work with students around this focus, and c) linking that understanding to practice in the lab-site and in their own classrooms. The presence of these professional conversations in the sample of CCL groups we have studied gives credence to the developmental, positive impact that CCL is having on the instructional culture in these schools.[9]

Inquiry. In reading the description of the inquiry session that follows, we draw the reader's attention to several of its features. First, the session reveals teachers talking to one another and not only to or through the coach about the topic of their inquiry. Second, the conversation stayed focused and included attention to what the students would need if they were to learn the strategy. Third, teachers experienced the strategy themselves during a previous inquiry session which gave them insight into what it required of learners and, therefore, into what students would have to do when using it. Fourth, these teachers have made a commitment as a group to work on the same strategies, sometimes with the same instructional texts, in order to increase their opportunity to learn from one another in their lab-sites. And, fifth, the coach played an important facilitative role in moving the conversation forward, making links to the professional literature, bringing closure to the discussion and identifying next steps. The coach, however, did not dominate the inquiry discussion.

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[9] We do not have the evidence with which to link the inquiry component of CCL to classroom practice and we think that it is unlikely that there is much observable evidence of change in practice at this time. It is too soon in the process of teachers' learning. However, given what is known about adult learning and the potential of professional development organized as it is in CCL to impact instruction, we conclude that the quality of the professional conversations within inquiry groups reveals important, positive changes in teachers' conceptions of their own practice and of how their students learn.

> *An Inquiry Session.* This group of teachers is working together in a cycle for the first time and their focus is on developing students' comprehension skills. More specifically, after having done some professional reading, they are striving to learn how to help students activate schema – their extant knowledge base – to assist them in comprehending text.[10] The professional literature that is informing their work is *Reading with Meaning: Teaching Comprehension in the Primary Grades,* by Debbie Miller. The book includes samples of student work produced from specific assignments as well as suggestions taken from Ellin Keene's *Mosaic of Thought,* another professional book with which the teachers are familiar. Thus, the reading builds on and reflects prior teacher learning. During the previous inquiry session, these teachers discussed the idea of helping students to generate mental models while reading or listening to text as an additional, active strategy that would assist them in comprehending.
>
> The coach begins this session by indicating the agenda for the day's work and then says that she would like to begin with a review of what teachers have tried related to the inquiry topic of mental models. She asks: "Anyone try anything related to the topic of mental models?" Teacher D says that she has not yet brought up the strategy because she is still working on schema. A second teacher, Teacher C says: "It's going well. When I read aloud at the end of the day, I mention the mental images and it's good because I'm not reading a picture book and [the children] have to picture it. We talked about their mental images of the mouse [in the story]. In Read Aloud I also introduced the idea of mental images. I want to pursue it more." Then, the teacher wonders aloud to the group: "When I do the read aloud at the end of the day, maybe I should have them make a little picture."
>
> The coach responds: "I noticed that when [another teacher] used the schema last week [during the demonstration lesson] she had the students make connections back to what they had done [in order to use them] and why they had done it. [She asked them] how they were using schema to understand the story. I wonder whether kids understand that using the schema and using the pictures [in their heads] can help them understand what they are reading. Are they making the connection?" Teacher C agrees that they need to alert the students to why they are using schema and says, "I think you can't mention it enough. You have to keep reminding the kids." The coach adds that the professional book they are reading suggests reviewing the topic with the students over and over again. She quotes from *Reading with Meaning*: "Learning to use schema is a journey," and then paraphrases the book's description of how students can begin to use the

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[10] Our understanding is that "schema" refers to the existing knowledge base that students bring with them to school, a knowledge base that is expanded by their work in school as well as their experiences outside of school. "Mental images" refers to the what active readers or listeners do when engaging with text: they create a picture in their minds of what the words are describing. The teachers in this CCL group want students to learn how to activate their schema – the knowledge they can bring to bear on the text they are reading – as well as learn how to create images from the words they are reading or hearing because by doing so, they will increase their engagement with and comprehension of the text.

> strategy without fully understanding it but, in time, they gain control over it through continued modeling and guided practice.
>
> Teacher C says, "I think that's a most interesting sentence [what the coach just read about using a strategy without fully understanding it]. **So when the kids say, yes, I'm using my schema, they may be at the beginning stages and will get to understand it better. At the beginning when I was teaching, I thought you taught a skill and they mastered it and that was that. But, it's an ever-going process of touching on it and continuing to come back to it over and over. It's like when I go to the math PD. Sometimes I don't understand at all and then, little by little I come to understand it better.** Another teacher in the group points out the long-lasting impact of using such strategies by saying, "It's in their heads now and so when they go to another grade they'll use the idea again and that's good. The more you help them practice it, the more they understand." Still a third teacher adds, "We have to keep going and going deeper and it will take them a while to get it all and put it together." The coach then adds, "Yes, so that [the strategies] are not all separate pieces."

This example of an inquiry group at work demonstrates the power of teachers having the time to learn in a formal setting about a topic in which they have great interest, and with the guidance provided by professional literature and the facilitation of a coach.[11] In our view, the discussion of the importance of reminding students about the strategy they are being asked to use, teachers' recognition that they need to check with students to make sure they are using the strategy effectively, and Teacher C's insight about how her own learning develops over time and is, therefore, similar to how her students' understandings will develop over time, demonstrates significant new knowledge that these teachers can now apply when they work with their students. To further demonstrate what we consider evidence of the power of this kind of instructionally focused conversation, we describe another segment of the same inquiry session. In this segment, the teachers' conversation exhibits the ways in which they are using insights gleaned from examining themselves as learners in order to improve their work with students. And, it exhibits the depth of their thinking about how they need to plan their teaching in order to be effective with their students. This segment of the inquiry discussion focuses on the next steps teachers want to take with respect to improving students' comprehension skills. It is about how they will go about introducing the topic of mental images to students once those students have begun to understand how their personal schema can help them understand what they read or hear.

> The coach says, "I'm just wondering about how we might get started with mental images with the kids, with moving from the schema. Do we think we can listen to the kids for the idea?" Teacher D: "I think we have to tell them and put the idea together for them of schema and mental images." Teacher C: "I think you have to start with what Teacher D said, start and tell them that they should make a picture in their heads. If it's a picture book, the author [of their professional book] says that you don't show the pictures but have the kids make the pictures in their heads. Is that

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[11] The coach featured in this example feels strongly that teachers in all of the cycles with which she has worked learned more in their inquiry sessions than in the debriefs that immediately followed the lab-sites. According to the coach, teachers seemed more able to discuss how lessons went in the context of the professional reading than in the immediacy of the lesson itself.

> right?" Teacher D: "[Because] if you show the picture, then you're showing them the image and they don't have to create it."
>
> Teacher C: "I'm thinking of what you said, Teacher D, about growing up with radio and not TV and how you had to create your own images. These kids are bombarded by images. I think it's a big thing to reinforce with them [that they can create their own images]." This teacher then uses what her colleague has said to draw the following conclusion about what will happen when children are asked to create their own mental images. She says, "We read [to them] about a chocolate cake and some of them have an image with frosting and some without. We need to talk to them about those mental images and that they are not all the same." The coach asks: "Do we have to show them how to make a mental image? Do they not know how to do this because they have visual images? Should we draw a picture to show them how we are doing it?"
>
> Teacher D: "That's how we did it with schema; we told them first." Teacher E: "We can show them our drawings and then the others can draw what they see." Coach: "And if they can see the differences in the drawings they make, then everyone can see how we make different mental models." Teacher E: "I would like to have them express themselves in words first and then draw it." Teacher C: "Isn't that the opposite of what you want? If they tell first about the image, they will hear each other's image and it might shape their own. So, might it be better if they drew their image before talking about it?"[12]
>
> The discussion of how to help the students develop mental images continues and results in the teachers remembering a humorous experience they had making mental images. They recollect a verbal description that Teacher E did of her father and how each of them had created a mental image of the man. They remember that even though she told them what he really looked like, indeed showed them a photo, they still retain their own personal vision, their own mental image of her father. There was a lot of laughter about this, about the power of self-generated mental images.

The final excerpt that we include from this inquiry group highlights the coach's efforts to connect the teachers' professional reading and inquiry discussion to their lab-site work. Specifically, the coach suggests possible next steps for introducing the concept of mental images as well as linking the new comprehension strategy with students' previous work around using schema. The coach ensures that teachers leave the inquiry session with specific plans for what they will attempt in their own classrooms and what information and student work they will bring to the next inquiry meeting so that the group can continue its discussion.

> The coach then makes a suggestion for next steps in the process of helping students use mental images. She says, "What if we all read a poem together and tell each other about our mental image to try this out and talk about it. I'm wondering if we have to build [ourselves] up to this and then do a mini-lesson with the kids to show them how we, as teachers, do this." In making this suggestion, the coach refers to an anchor lesson in their professional book, reviewing what

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[12] Our observations, as well as the coach's perspective, led us to conclude that this same group of teachers was not yet able to have discussions of this depth in the debrief sessions of their cycles. We present an example of a debrief from this group later in the paper and will remind readers of the differences in the conversations that take place in the two settings.

> the author says about teaching the first lesson on this topic and about how to make the link between schema and mental models. The coach says: "I'm thinking of what the lesson would look like, what the anchor lesson would be. The idea is simple but profound: all of our mental images and schema are different because we are different. Maybe we should each try some mental images in the classroom this week." After some further discussion, the coach asks: "Would it be easier to begin mental images with a poem where you have one small piece [of text]?" Teachers begin to discuss this question and, after several minutes, with the help of the coach, they agree that each of them will use the same poem with their students during the next week as a way to introduce the topic of making mental images. At the next inquiry, they will bring student work to share and discuss what they have learned about teaching this comprehension strategy.

In our sample of CCL groups and their associated inquiries, this one stands out for the depth of its discussion and the clarity of the links between professional reading, teachers' practice, students' work, and teachers' subsequent reflection on practice. It demonstrates the important role the coach plays in guiding teachers' thinking and learning while ensuring that the ideas they generate are their own. It demonstrates that the constructivist ideas that undergird the Workshop approach to students' instruction are also guiding this inquiry group's work. And, it suggests the important role the coach has in directing teachers to relevant materials that teachers will find valuable. The coach who led this inquiry gave considerable thought to the materials she suggested and understood that for maximal learning, the professional readings needed to be tightly tied to the work teachers were doing in their classrooms.

> I believe they're very interested in this book, because this book is practical. It is written in a way that's quite clear, and it shows student work in it, and it gives quotes from students. So I think those are the kinds of books that interest teachers. And then clearly at the end [of a chapter] it says, "These are the key points that children should know about schema and making mental images, and those are related to Mosaic of Thought." If the book does not relate to the focus – if the inquiry isn't tied closely with the practice, if there is a disconnect there, what happens is you've started, the teachers generate a question, and you start reading along those lines. Then you begin to implement something in your classroom, you begin to focus on something in your classroom, and now the reading is not quite in line with what's going on in the classroom, that's where they drift apart. So my goal in this CCL was to keep that tight connection, and I said that up front to the participants. Coach A

When inquiry went well, as in the above example, teachers as well as coaches became engaged in bringing professional materials to the attention of their colleagues as these teachers from two lab-sites other than the one described above note.

> We used the book *Spelling K to 8* by Diane Snowball. We also read articles from *The Art of Teaching Reading* by Lucy Calkins. And we used a little bit from *Word Matters*, but we found that it just wasn't as useful to us as the others. ... [The coach] mentioned that some other teachers really enjoyed that book, *Spelling*

> *K to 8*, and she thought it was really practical, gave a lot of good lessons, so she kind of said, "Well, this is a really great text, so we'll use this." And then other teachers would bring with them different articles that they got in workshops or from other books that they were reading that were helpful. So it really was a team effort. We all contributed something to the discussion. Teacher A

> We did cover a little bit of one text, not a whole lot of it, but I was doing a lot of reading with that on my own, so... it was reinforcing what we did. We tried to pick chapters that were kind of building off of what we were doing, whether it was conferring, or coaching or, you know, our students, and so on. We were kind of building off of what we were doing in the classroom and that was helpful. Teacher B

In contrast, when the inquiry had an unclear or shifting focus, and when the links between the professional readings and the lab-sites were not explicit, teachers realized that they were not getting the full benefit of inquiry (or of other components of the cycle). Furthermore, some of them realized that without a common instructional focus, they were not truly engaged in collaborative work.

> We rotate rooms and during the [inquiry] meeting we'll ask [the teacher in the next host classroom], "What area are your kids working on? So it's sort of like we jump from what my class might be doing, to what another teacher might be doing. So it feels a little bit jumbled. ...I've gotten some good ideas about editing, punctuation, how to teach a mini-lesson and punctuation, but it just doesn't have a cohesive feel to it...It would be good if we were all working on the same thing, and then moving onto the next topic, and then were all working on that next topic. It seems like we're all sort of trying to fly solo, and then coming together and learning what we can. It's a little disjointed. Teacher L

This teacher's recognition of the problems caused by a lack of coherent focus across the components of CCL demonstrates growth in teacher thinking: she now understands through first-hand experience, the potential value of collaborative work for her own and her colleagues' learning. As she says, she now knows that "it would be good if we were all working on the same thing."

Most of the inquiry sessions we observed had neither the depth of discussion nor the explicit links to practice that were present in the above example about reading comprehension strategies. However, they all demonstrated teacher learning in conversation with colleagues and a coach, and, as such, they all had the potential to become even more powerful opportunities for teacher learning. As we noted in the introduction to this section, teachers and coaches reported that teachers seemed to have deeper conversations about instruction during inquiry sessions than during the debriefs that followed the lab-site observations and teaching. It was during inquiry, as these teachers note, when they could consider their students' work, their own instruction, and the links between the two in light of what they were reading.

> What's been more helpful even than CCL are the inquiry groups, because that's where you get a chance to do research, and you actually get a chance to sit with teachers and collaborate around the ideas that you already have and come up with new, innovative things. Teacher P
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> What we did, like if we did a piece of poetry, all of us would do it. Then we'd bring feedback to the coach, and all of us discuss, and bring some of the children's work that they did back, and we talked about it....And that's how we did it. Teacher D
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> When we were reading articles and we were discussing those before we even did a demonstration lesson or a debriefing, we would meet for an hour and just discuss articles that we've read or what we were going to do next with our plan, and those discussions were easier [than in the last year]. I think it came easier because I have a little bit more experience now than I did last year, and I'm noticing certain things in my kids a little bit more. I'm more aware of what they're doing and [I'm more aware of] their writing too as a result of Writer's Workshop training that I've had. So I think there was a lot more to be said, that people really knew what they were talking about and what they needed. Teacher A

Inquiry, then, appears to be well on its way to becoming a significant component of a cycle. It is the place in which teachers, in collaboration with one another, link their classroom practices and experiences with the findings of those who study and write about literacy instruction as well as provide some of the professional development for it.[13]

Implementing the Lab-Sites. Education Matters' researchers observed eight lab-site demonstrations and their accompanying inquiry groups, pre-conferences, and debriefs.[14] These observations led us to conclude that the structure of CCL was firmly in place in these schools and that, despite several challenges posed by scheduling, testing, and the availability of substitute teachers, the cycles ran as planned.

Our observations also led us to conclude that some lab-sites were designed in keeping with the ideas that undergird CCL and the Workshop approach to instruction – there was coherence among the parts of each – while others revealed the absence of links between the parts of CCL and/or Workshop. In almost half of the lab-sites in our sample, the presence of a large number of teachers who had little training in Workshop strategies made it difficult for them to either host or reflect on their own or their colleagues' practice.

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[13] Many teachers in Boston, for example, have attended workshops with the professionals who have written the books and articles they are reading in their inquiry sessions.

[14] Our sample included one cycle that had formal time set-aside for the pre-conference and others that tacked the pre-conference – the discussion of what would happen in the lab-site and the roles that teachers would take – onto the end of an inquiry or debrief session. As a result, we have limited data with respect to pre-conferences as designed by the BPE.

Despite these variations, almost all of the lab-sites we observed demonstrated progress from what we had learned and seen during the first year of implementation. Most important, in our view, teachers who had been extremely reluctant or resistant to participating in the work of CCL during Year I were now engaged voluntarily, albeit tentatively, to a far greater extent than in Year I.

Holding a Pre-Conference. There was considerable variation across the eight lab-sites with respect to how and whether a formal pre-conference was held. At one end of the spectrum, was a cycle in which a) the plans for the lesson to be observed were fully described, b) the host teacher identified what she had taught in the several days leading up to the observation and what, specifically, she planned to do in the day's lab-site, and c) observing teachers were given a set of three questions with which to frame their observation. These were:

- Is "no child being left behind" in this assignment? If some students seem reluctant to participate, what do you see that might explain why?
- Can you see places to fit in lessons on figures of speech and other literary devices? Which ones do you think should be included?
- What do you see in the students' notebook entries that could guide their transition from notebook entry to poetry?

Immediately following the fifteen minute pre-conference, teachers moved to the host-teacher's room and the lab-site began.

At the other end of the spectrum, we observed a very brief discussion of what the teacher would be doing during the lab-site and how she hoped the students would respond. There was no discussion of what the observing teachers would do after the mini-lesson was completed and no one, not even the coach, raised that as a question.

In between these examples were cycles in which teachers discussed the lab-site demonstration during inquiry sessions which occurred either immediately before or one or more days prior to the lab-site. Such a pre-conference took place among the teachers whose inquiry cycle (described above) was focused on reading comprehension. It was limited to the following exchange:

> The coach asked, "Teacher C, you are going to do the lab-site [on Wednesday]. Can we help you with anything?" Teacher C replied, I'm thinking about using [name of a book set in the countryside] and having them talk about their schema and mental images. But a lot of it is about hearing and not just visual. I thought of telling the kids to pay attention to sounds they hear as they are falling asleep so they will be aware of listening when I read the poem. I don't know what they will come up with [as far as schema]." Teacher E responds, "Today is a good day [for sounds] because of the wind. I would tell my kids of close their eyes and listen to the wind."

> Teacher C says, "That's a good idea," and another teacher in the group says, "I don't think it will make a difference if the book is about the country. The idea is listening." The coach points out that mental images can come from all five senses and cites a section of the teachers' professional book. The host teacher again raises concerns about whether she has chosen the best book for the lesson, but they all agree that they will see what happens the next day.

There was no further discussion of how the rest of the lab-site, the components of Workshop that follow after the mini-lesson, would be linked to the mini-lesson.

The pre-conference, whenever it is held, is important in so far as it sets the stage for the demonstration lesson and subsequent debrief. If the course of study and inquiry focus have already been clearly articulated and the CCL components are coherently linked throughout the cycle, then the pre-conference should be a simple, quick reminder of the lab-site lesson to come. If, however, the cycle is disjointed, the pre-conference discussion may carry additional weight; it may be a time in which participants can better define their focus for the lab-site work.

Demonstrating Instructional Strategies. In our report on the first year of CCL, we noted that the advent of teachers demonstrating instruction in front of their colleagues as part of a collaborative learning enterprise represented a remarkable, positive change in the organization of teachers' work and the development of a professional community. We also noted that the teaching that was demonstrated varied in its quality which sometimes led teachers to question what they could learn by observing a teacher who was struggling to begin to use the Workshop literacy strategies or by demonstrating when they had minimal knowledge and skill. The issue of what could be learned by observing and or demonstrating instructional strategies remained a puzzle to some of the teachers in our sample during the second year of CCL.

Therefore, in Year II as in Year I of CCL implementation, the lab-sites we observed varied with respect to a) who did the demonstration teaching, the coach or a teacher, b) what got demonstrated, and c) how well the components of the Workshop model were implemented during the lab-site. Because the demonstration teaching is essential to the learning opportunities embedded in the CCL model, the potential for the lab-sites to provide effective professional development for teachers was reduced when teachers were reluctant to take on the responsibility for hosting a lab-site. Teachers who refused to demonstrate a lesson explained that a) they believed they were more likely to learn from watching an expert, for example the coach, and b) they did not know enough about Workshop to confidently demonstrate its strategies.

We begin the discussion of lab-site implementation by reviewing teachers' opinions about the value of this component of CCL, most particularly, the value of having teachers demonstrate Workshop strategies. In doing this, we want readers to be aware that many of the teachers in our sample, some of whom participated in CCL cycles during Year I, do not yet understand the reason for observing one another's practice. They believe that they will learn best from observing an expert's practice; they do not yet understand that they can learn from teachers with both more and less expertise because the learning comes from analyzing what they observe during the lab-site and considering it in light of the theory that undergirds Workshop instruction.

Learning in CCL is not limited to observing expert practice and then "copying" it.

Who demonstrates the teaching? From the outset, there has been variation in the extent to which coaches and teachers demonstrate teaching strategies. In the beginning of Year I, coaches were likely to do several demonstration lessons and then encourage teachers to take on that role. This was a successful strategy in a number of schools, but it failed in others when teachers refused to take on the responsibility of demonstrating. As a result, throughout the first year of implementation, many teachers observed coaches teaching but never hosted a lab-site. Or, as we noted in our Year I report, one teacher hosted throughout most of the cycle.

During the 2002-2003 school year, coaches worked hard to encourage teachers to take on the role of demonstrating teaching strategies. They encountered considerable resistance among the teachers in some cycles even when the teachers had participated in CCL during Year I. These teachers reported being reluctant to demonstrate for a number of reasons. First, some said they were apprehensive because **they feared the embarrassment that would accompany doing a poor job of teaching.** Fear of looking bad was especially nerve wracking to teachers in cycles where principals or other administrators were active participants. In addition, some teachers noted that **they did not know enough about the Workshop strategies to demonstrate them.** Such teachers reported that they had participated in little Workshop-focused professional development and, as a result, had no idea what the teaching should look like. How, they asked, could they demonstrate when they did not know what they were trying to do? The following teacher comments are typical of three of the lab-site groups in which teachers were reluctant to demonstrate in front of their colleagues.

> This year there has been a little bit of pressure for the teachers to actually do the lessons. I don't know where the pressure is coming from, but that's been a little stressful this year for everybody. It's just hard getting up in front of all of your colleagues, and your boss, and being "on." I love being in front of kids, but it's harder with adults. I wouldn't say it's a downfall, but it's just been a definite noticeable pressure. ...And I don't think it's that people don't want to do the work. I think it's that we're fearful of what's to come out of it, you know?... I'd rather be sitting back and observing and learning, rather than being in the battle, you know? I'd like to watch the battle and see how it goes, and then see if I could try it on my own. Teacher L
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> I'm not comfortable doing [the teaching] because I'm having people watch me do something that I'm not sure I'm doing correctly. I felt like we were given a lot of responsibility that we weren't ready for. This is our first time seeing Writer's Workshop. So I think most of us said over and over again that we don't know what it's supposed to look like. And it was like we were expected to know. And so that was difficult. I guess you should have your self confidence, but if you don't, then you don't. I can't pretend like I'm confident in what I'm doing because I'm not... It's hard enough when it's kids and you mess up. When you say something that you meant to say some other way. It's just a hundred times

> worse when you have people [who are your colleagues] watching you and there you are messing things up. Teacher M

> I think people were really hesitant because they just didn't want, you know, you just feel like you're being exposed somewhat and are vulnerable to criticism. Teacher U

> I was really nervous about having six teachers come into my classroom and watch. I had everything planned out, I always have, but I was just kind of nervous. It's one thing to teach students, and if you say something wrong, it's like, "Oh, wait, let me go back." But then when you have teachers, it's, "Oh no, what if I mess up?" Every teacher messes up, but you don't really think about that. Teacher V

Coaches and principals found it frustrating to encounter such teacher resistance and, in some cycles, were unable to change the dynamic that led the coach to do most of the demonstrating.

> They really resisted demonstrating. They really insisted that [I do it.] Even [a teacher who is capable] said today, "Why don't you do it again?" And I do think they're ready to [do it themselves]. There are certainly enough of them that are ready to do it. Coach B

Principals were aware of these problems, tried to encourage teachers to take on the demonstration role, and reported some success in this regard. Still, the teachers they persuaded were not particularly happy with taking on the role of demonstrating teacher. (See Teacher L's comment above).

In contrast to these teachers who felt they lacked the knowledge and skill to demonstrate, one or two others thought that they knew enough to be exempt from further cycles. In this category were also teachers who thought that to demonstrate they needed to be expert.

> No, [I did not want to demonstrate] because the way CCL was presented to me was that, if you're demonstrating, you're basically the expert. So if you're the expert, your role is to teach other people and not to be taught. Which makes it difficult for the demonstrating teacher who doesn't believe she's an expert. Teacher P

This teacher's comment reveals a misunderstanding about CCL and the purpose of having all teachers demonstrate, but it also reveals a misunderstanding (or lack of understanding) about how observing teaching in order to reflect on it can inform most teachers' practice.

This teacher's next comment reveals, from a different perspective, this lack of understanding about a) what can be learned from demonstrating and observing, and b) the importance of continuous learning becoming a part of teachers' professional practice.

> And the reason I refused [to demonstrate] was, because... CCL is supposed to be a learning process, and I've already been trained, so why am I in [a cycle]? And I've been doing it for two years now. And then I was told at that point, "Well, don't worry because you won't be hosting it." I said, well, if I'm not hosting it, why am I doing it? Teacher P

Teacher P is not alone in her confusion and in her belief that teachers' learning can be finished. Therefore, if cycles that include teachers such as Teacher P are to become successful, then it will be necessary for coaches and, perhaps, principals to review the basic theory that undergirds CCL as professional development, emphasizing and explaining the value of continuous improvement. Without directly addressing teachers' misconceptions about observing, reflecting, and being finished with learning, it is unlikely that the cycles can become sufficiently effective as venues in which teachers learn from and then improve upon their work with students.

Second, and somewhat related to the first point, **some teachers did not see the value in observing their colleagues or in being observed.** Such teachers did not yet understand that observing could be beneficial for the teacher being observed as well as for those doing the observing. They did not yet understand that observing was the first of a two-part activity in which the reflection on teaching might be far more powerful than the observation alone. Because they did not yet understand the power of this component of CCL, they honestly wondered what they or anyone else could learn from spending time this way. Like some of the teachers quoted above, they did not want to participate in the lab-site unless the coach or a much more skillful teacher, was demonstrating.

> I don't really think I learned a lot from me doing it. I think I would learn more from [the coach] or someone else hosting it and doing the lesson, just because I just do what I've been doing. I don't really know if it's wrong or right. It's just what I've been doing. I'm not going to do anything differently. I don't think I'm learning anything particular from [observing]. I got feedback on [things] I kind of knew anyway, what I needed to do, or what I didn't do. And then, I did get feedback from other teachers and from [the coach]. A lot of it is just things that they thought – how I could move on from that lesson and what I could do next. It was suggestions, so some I took and some I didn't. I kind of still did what I intended to do. Teacher O

> Demonstrating? I don't mind doing it, but I certainly would not want to do it every week. It's too much work. It's too much work on top of already too much work that you have. Teacher H

Teachers who were at this level of development with respect to understanding the potential of learning through the lab-site experience often did value observing for the potential it provided for picking up specific lessons or strategies which they would then try in their own classes. Put another way, such teachers were still in the mode of viewing professional development as an opportunity to gather tricks-of-the-trade that they could use immediately. Even when they were persuaded to do a demonstration, and even in the context of getting some useful feedback, such teachers did not report that they learned from or changed some aspect of their practice as a result of the experience.

Coaches in such situations struggled to help teachers understand the value of considering a piece of instruction as a learning opportunity for adults as well as children.

And, third, a few teachers simply considered it the coaches' job to demonstrate.

> My interpretation of the coach is to come in here and show us different strategies, and do it with the children, and make us feel more comfortable in trying it. I think that would be a big help if they would have more modeling. Teacher T

In other lab-sites groups, however, coaches did not encounter such resistance and teachers realized the value of learning from demonstrating as well as from observing their peers.

> I particularly enjoyed another class. The teacher had volunteered, somewhat reluctantly, and it was a pleasure for her and for us, to see how easy it is. People were not judgmental, we're not there to point a finger at anyone. So just to see it was an average lesson, and how it went with the kids. I enjoyed that one. Teacher W

> [Demonstrating] made me do my homework and it made me go deeper into the stuff and learn it in a deeper level, and then the fact that I had to play it out with students and other people in my room. What I'm trying to say is I had to do my homework and I had to do the work and just going through that whole process, which at times was tedious and overwhelming, but it made me learn. Teacher X

However, as one teacher noted, observing can be more valuable if what is being observed is actually relevant for the teachers who are observing.

> It's important to have people at your same entry point, say for example, if I haven't started Reader's Workshop and I go into a classroom with a teacher who's been doing it for a long time - I just think you learn more when you're at the same entry point, it just doesn't serve any purpose for people to go and see things that are far from their level of understanding. Teacher Y

This teacher raises an important point about teacher learning: the learning opportunity has to be at the right level of difficulty, within the "zone of proximal development," in order for the learner to make good use of it. Therefore, perhaps some of the resistance to observing did result, as teachers suggest, from the mismatch between what they knew and knew how to do and what they were being asked to demonstrate. It may be that the task was too much of a stretch for some of the teachers. However, a good many teachers resisted demonstrating and wished that they did not have to observe their colleagues not because of a mismatch, but rather because they did not find any value in spending their time in this way.

Implementing classroom instruction: What gets demonstrated? In the eight lab-site sessions we observed, seven were implemented by teachers and one by the coach in collaboration with a teacher. Several of the teachers we observed were demonstrating in front of their colleagues (and Education Matters' researchers) for the first time. Others had done multiple demonstrations during this and previous cycles.

Teachers within and across the CCL groups varied considerably in what they knew about the design, purpose, and implementation of Workshop. Some, in other words, had participated in a good deal of professional development focused on Workshop instruction while others had not. Teachers also varied in the extent to which, as a result of the organization of their CCL group, they were fully prepared for the lesson they would host. Teachers whose course of study and inquiry focus were coherent and tied to the lab-site were better prepared for the demonstration than were those whose course of study might be loosely linked to the inquiry which, in turn, might be loosely linked to the lab-site work.[15] Teachers who had a full pre-conference prior to the lab-site were also better prepared, as were their colleagues, for the lab-site work.

In reading the descriptions of the lab-site lessons that follow, it is important for the reader to understand that very few teachers in these schools, or in other EP schools, are sufficiently experienced with Workshop to implement this approach in a highly skilled manner. This instructional approach is still quite new in the district. Therefore, although we present some examples of lab-site demonstrations in which the components of either Readers' or Writers' Workshop were not well-linked to each other or well-implemented, our purpose is not to embarrass the teachers nor make them look inept. Rather, we present the examples in the spirit of inquiry into the status of CCL and of Workshop instruction. We present them in order to a) identify aspects of Workshop instruction in need of further attention within CCL groups and b) indicate the importance of helping coaches develop strategies with which they can 1) create better coherence in the lab-site demonstrations of Workshop, 2) ensure that demonstration lessons, even if not done expertly, are instructive, that is, are used to increase reflection on instruction, and 3) bring up key issues for discussion in the debriefs that follow the observations.

We stress again that the examples provided below are not meant as criticisms of the lab-site work that Education Matters observed during the 2002-2003 school year, but rather as reminders of what the BPE and the BPS know all too well – that there is still a lot of work to be done around the implementation of workshop instruction as well as collaborative coaching. The examples that follow should not in any way be construed so as to diminish the tremendous effort and marked progress being made by the teachers, coaches, and principals who are engaged in this important work.

Example 1. We present this first example of instruction in a lab-site to indicate the need for coaches to develop strategies with which to highlight the learning opportunities that can exist even when a lesson does not go as well as expected. In the lab-site that led to the description that follows, the teacher, although quite nervous at the prospect of hosting for the first time, had agreed to teach a mini-lesson related to the reading comprehension focus of the cycle. The purpose of the mini-lesson was to help a guided reading group of four students review (or learn) how to identify the main point when reading a piece of text.

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[15] Indeed, one CCL group did not have time scheduled for implementing the inquiry component of CCL.

> The teacher began the lesson by giving each student a short story about a topic with which they were familiar.[16] Then, she identified for them a series of vocabulary words over which they might stumble and asked them to briefly define each of the words. When the discussion of the vocabulary words was complete, the teacher asked the students to open their books, look at the pictures, consider the title, and tell her what they thought would be the focus of the book. Students offer a few ideas using short phrases or just single words. **Then, the teacher said to the students: "We are looking for the main idea. Please underline anything important on the first two pages."** The students were then given three minutes to read and underline the first two pages of the text in light of the teacher's direction to "underline anything important on the first two pages."

There was no other mention of "the main point" – why it might matter to students as they read or how they might find it helpful to identify the main point in order to increase their understanding of text. The teacher did not distinguish for the students how to determine what they might think was important from what was the main point.

> When the reading time was over, the teacher asked the students to tell her what the story was about and what happened in the two pages they had read. The students were able to do this after which the teacher asked them what they had underlined. When a student answered, the teacher asked, "Why was that important?" After the student responded, she asked another student for an example of what the student had underlined and, again, asked why that piece of text was important. [Note: there was no mention of the topic of the mini-lesson which was to have been "finding the main idea."] The teacher asked the students to continue reading and underlining what was important. The mini-lesson was over.
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> Following the mini-lesson, the observing teachers had conferences with a different set of students from the same class who were engaged in independent reading. The teachers did not have a specific focus for their conferences.
>
> After ten minutes, the teacher called her guided reading group back together to share what they had learned from reading the story. She asked: "Have you finished the story?" One of the four students had and one was on the last page. The other two were not that far along. The teacher then said to the two students who were not nearly finished, "That's perfectly OK if you didn't finish." Then, to the whole group she asked, "Why did we use magic markers?" A student answers, " So it would show up." The teacher said, "Since some of you didn't finish the story, what do you think will happen?" One student answered after which the teacher asked another

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[16] We are omitting specific details from our description of lab-sites in order to protect the confidentiality of those teachers, coaches and principals who permitted us to observe their work.

> student for her thoughts. This student had finished the story and gave a detailed description of how it ended. The teacher then said to the others, "You will find a happy ending as you finish reading. I liked the story. I thought it was cute. Have any of you had this experience [referring to the events in the text]?" After a student recounts a related story, the teacher tells the students that the lesson is over. They return to their desks.

In this follow-up discussion with the guided reading group, there was no mention of the focus of the mini-lesson: the main idea, how to find it, and why it is important to determine the main idea in reading text.

We do not present this example to fault the teacher for the way in which she conducted the mini-lesson. We present it to confirm what teachers said repeatedly during interviews: that when they are at the early stages of learning how to implement Workshop, they do not know how to expertly conduct a mini-lesson or weave the components of a Workshop lesson together. Their lack of knowledge makes them nervous about demonstrating in front of colleagues. Given that reality, if teachers are persuaded to demonstrate, what is the value of observing for the other teachers in the CCL group? What is the value for the host teacher? These are important questions to answer in light of some teachers' beliefs that they cannot learn from anyone other than expert teachers.

In our view, this mini-lesson provided the coach with an opportunity to facilitate a conversation about what happened in the mini-lesson and how it might be better planned and implemented another time. Such a conversation could help the demonstrating teacher as well as the others learn/review the rationale for making sure that a) the components of the Workshop session are linked to each other and b) the mini-lesson's focus is made explicit to the students. The debrief would have been the venue in which to have had this important discussion and the discussion could have helped teachers understand why demonstrating can be of great value as a learning opportunity for them and for their colleagues. However, the debrief did not focus on these issues. Instead, it consisted of largely unrelated remarks about teachers' conferences with other students and some congratulatory comments about the demonstrating teachers' effective ways of engaging students. As a result, we can understand why some teachers have not come to value demonstrating or observing during lab-sites as professional development opportunities.

Example 2. We present this second example, as we did the first, to highlight again the need for coaches to develop the capacity to make good learning opportunities out of Workshop teaching that may be less than expert due to teachers' inexperience with the instructional strategy. In example two, the demonstrating teacher had told the coach and her colleagues during the pre-conference that she would be doing a whole-class mini-lesson designed to help her students make inferences when they read. The coach and observing teachers knew ahead of time that students would not practice developing inferences in their independent reading time, but rather as a homework assignment. They knew that subsequent to the mini-lesson, students would work in their Book Club groups and that the observing teachers would circulate among the Book Club groups listening to the students' conversations which were supposed to focus on character development.

Given this plan for the lab-site, it was clear at the outset that some important features of Workshop instruction would be missing: a) the mini-lesson would not be tied to the independent work that followed, and b) the observing teachers would not have observed a lesson that would help them know how to conference with the students about character development. If the coach and/or the host teacher had particular reasons for selecting this particular approach to the lesson, then we think it was incumbent upon them to share this rationale with the other members of the lab-site and to review more broadly the objectives of the demonstration lesson as they related to the course of study. To the best of our knowledge, no such conversation took place.

> Teacher Q began her mini-lesson by reminding the students that she would be reading to them from an easy book in order to help them learn about making inferences.[17] They would later use what they learned about how to make a double-sided entry – the evidence for the inference on one side of the column and the inference on the other – for their homework assignment. (The teacher had an enlarged, blank sample page for this kind of entry on the easel next to her.) Teacher Q then began reading the story. When she had read a couple of pages, she told the children that she was getting an inference. It developed when the mother in the story told the boy "not to bother her." Teacher Q wrote this quote on the chart underneath the Quote/Picture side. Then, she wrote, "The mother is a little touchy today," underneath the Inference side.
>
> Teacher Q read a bit more and then said, "I'm getting another inference here. The boy keeps asking for a dog. He asked for one last year, too." Teacher Q wrote "last year" underneath the Quote/Picture side and then wrote that the boy was "very persistent" underneath the Inference side. The students appeared to be listening. Teacher Q read further and then asked the class, "What do we infer from all these clues?" Two hands went up. One boy said that the family did not have much money. "Good," said Teacher Q.
>
> The reading continued with the teacher stopping to explain that the mother had to get a job and one of their neighbors had to come take care of the boy. But the boy didn't like the neighbor. Teacher Q asked, "What can we infer about this?" One hand went up "The boy wants his mother to spend more time with him." "Okay," Teacher Q says. "What else can we say?" Another student said that the boy in the story wants to "trade [the neighbor] for his mom." Teacher Q asked, "Are there other ideas? What does this say about [the neighbor's] character?" No hands go up. Teacher Q writes her answer on the chart: "The boy doesn't like [the neighbor] at all, basically."
>
> The mini-lesson continued in this format of the teacher reading and both the teacher and students generating inferences. A boy volunteered at one point with the following "inference," "The boy wants the neighbor to leave." Teacher Q responded to him by saying, "No, that's [not an inference, that's] literal. Anyone else?"

We want to note that the teacher's response may have been a missed teaching opportunity if, in fact, the student did not yet understand the concept of "inference." The coach did not enter the conversation at this point which may have also made this also a missed coaching opportunity.[18] The mini-lesson continued with the teacher seeking additional inferences that met her criteria even though the criteria went unspecified after the boy's error.

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[17] This mini-lesson did not include any review of the term "inference" and, because we had not observed prior mini-lessons on this reading strategy we do not know the extent to which all of the students in the group understood its meaning and had practiced drawing inferences.

> A few other students volunteered after the first boy's incorrect answer and the teacher was pleased with their inferences. Teacher Q went back to reading the story and was getting to its climax. The students seemed quite attentive. "What's going to happen?" she asked, seeking predictions rather than inferences at this point. The students offered their answers in quick succession. Teacher Q said. "Wow. There are lots of things we could write down." Teacher Q then finished reading the story. The students laughed at the end. Teacher Q then asked, "How many people think they can do that with their own book?" A few students raise their hands but there was no further discussion. Students move to their Book Club groups.[19]

Although the mini-lesson on inferences was well-planned by the teacher, it was not connected to the students' independent work. Rather, it was preparation for a homework assignment. As a result, the work that the students did in their Book Clubs was unconnected to the mini-lessons and did not provide a) students with an opportunity to practice what they had been taught in the mini-lessons nor b) observing teachers with an opportunity to observe students attempting to use the strategy. The lab-site, in other words, did not provide an optimal learning opportunity to either students or teachers.

The question we raise again is: how can such a lab-site demonstration be made useful for the host and observing teachers? How can it be used by the coach in the debrief as an occasion for teacher learning? The debrief of this lab-site, for the most part, focused on the topic of Book Clubs. However, near the end of the session the coach told the teachers that she wanted them to notice that when Teacher Q started her mini-lesson she reminded the students that she would be using a simple book when modeling. Some of the teachers remarked that the book would not be easy enough for their students. They also doubted that their students could make the kind of inferences Teacher Q's students were able to make.

The coach then noted that it was for those reasons that it is best to use a simple text to demonstrate with – even one simpler than the one Teacher Q used, if necessary. She stressed the importance of choosing the right text for such a mini-lesson because the point of the lesson would not be the text but rather the process of drawing inferences. The only way for the mini-lesson to be as crisp and as focused as the one demonstrated, suggested the coach, was for the teachers to "forget about the story and focus on the skill – making inferences." Teacher Q reported that she had been pleased with how the lesson went and with the inferences her students were able to draw. Teachers kept talking about the difficulty they would have if they used the same book with their students. The coach reminded the teachers that the lesson came out of their professional reading and was scripted out for the teachers to try. She also told them that the lesson had been designed for a class two grades below the one in which Teacher Q used it. There was no other discussion about the implementation of the mini-lesson nor about the absence of any link between the mini-lesson and the follow-up Workshop components.

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[18] During Education Matters' observations in Years I and II of CCL, we saw coaches interrupt mini-lessons or guided reading groups in order to take advantage of a "coachable moment" that would help the students better understand the point of the mini-lesson as well as help the teachers improve their skill with respect to teaching the focus of the mini-lesson. While we would not recommend this coaching strategy in all circumstances, when done well – gently, tactfully and with follow-up discussion – it appears to be a powerful tool at coaches' disposal.

[19] We do not describe the Book Club segment of the lab-site because it was unconnected to the mini-lesson and because teachers observed but did not interact with students during this time.

Example 3. We present a third example to demonstrate a different point about the work that teachers and coaches do together as they plan and implement the lab-site work. We present this example to demonstrate the ways in which a coach can play a more active role during the lab-site itself. The coaches presented in the first two examples, as well as the others in our sample, did not take an active role in the lab-sites we observed. In this example, we note also that even though the teachers were quite new to Workshop as an instructional strategy, there was a tight link between the focus of the mini-lesson, the students' independent work that followed, and the focus of teachers' conferences with students. The short debrief that occurred during the lab-site itself also focused directly on the topic of the mini-lesson.

At the start of the lab-site time, the demonstrating teacher had a brief conversation with the coach in which she expressed her anxiety about whether the students would respond appropriately to what she planned to teach. (The formal pre-conference for this lab-site was held earlier in the week.) The teacher was also concerned that the students would be inattentive because they would be tired from MCAS testing. Nonetheless, at the appropriate time she called the students to the front of the room and began the mini-lesson.

> The teacher began, "Last Monday, we talked about good questions and why it's important for you to ask good questions. Teacher K asked you to come up with some good questions for your books - questions that you haven't thought of yet. Today, we're going to continue working on good questions and we're going to talk about the difference between "thin" questions and "fat" questions. What do you think "thin" questions mean?"
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> Three students raised their hands to volunteer. One student called out, "Skinny." The teacher ignored this comment and called on a boy with a raised hand. The boy answered that thin questions are questions that you don't need a lot of information for. "For example," the boy explained, "a thin question might be something like "What's the title of your book?" That's a thin question." The teacher scripted the boy's answer on the chart paper. "So thin questions don't make you do a lot of thinking," she said. "We need to be asking more complex questions than "What's the title of your book?'"
>
> The teacher called next on another student who answered that fat questions should be juicy. "Good," said the teacher. Still another said that fat questions can start conversations. One more said that, "Thin questions can be answered in one sentence. Fat questions make you branch out."

During the mini-lesson the coach played a subtle, yet important role in supporting the teacher who, we want to note, was a first-year teacher with limited experience with Workshop instruction. In addition, she and her colleagues in the CCL group had participated only recently in Workshop-focused professional development. Therefore, concerned that the host teacher might be a bit unsure of how to respond to students’ answers, the coach made soft yet audible noises during the mini-lesson in response to signal the importance of a student’s response. For example, after one student said that fat questions should be “juicy” and another said that they make you “branch out,” the coach said “oh!” and “hmm!” Her responses seemed to be cues for the host teacher, who would then record those particular responses on the chart paper, ask a follow-up question of the student and/or repeat the student’s answer for the benefit of the whole class.

> The mini-lesson continued with further discussion of thin and fat questions and then a more formal comparison of the two types of questions. Some students actively participated in this discussion; others were silent. A few students began to think of fat questions that they could ask of the books they were reading. Others were struggling with this application task. Realizing that most of the fat questions posed by the students were of the compare and contrast type, the teacher asked, “What other questions - besides compare and contrast - might have been good, fat questions?”No one answered. The teacher said, “We did this on Monday guys.” Still, the students were quiet. The teacher then said to a student, “ You were having trouble with the title of your book. You were trying to figure out what the title meant because you have the word “fox” in the title, but so far there is no “fox” in the story. You asked me, “What does the title mean?” What could you have asked me instead?” The girl answered, “How does the title relate to the story?” The teacher responded, “Good, we can ask how does it relate to the story? How does it relate to the events happening in the book?”
>
> At this point, the mini-lesson was about to end and the teacher said to the students, “Just to review, what’s a thin question?” A boy answered, “What’s the title?” “What does thin mean?” the teacher asked. “Thin means short,” one student responded. “Okay,” the teacher said, “but does it always have to be short?” Another student said, “Thin means weak.” The coach said, “hmm” to this and the teacher recorded it. Then the teacher said, “Today when you go off to read, I want you to ask a fat question. I want you to think of a fat question for when you’re buzzing.”[20] The coach now stepped in and said, “I want to state that even more strongly. When we come around and see you [and conference with you], we’re going to be looking for this. This is not a “maybe try this” kind of thing. This is a “definitely try this” kind of thing. We’re going to be looking for fat questions, so use your Post-Its.” The teacher echoes the coach’s directions, asking students to please use their Post-Its.”

Students immediately returned to their seats and began reading in their independent reading books. The teachers held a quick debrief in the front of the room during which the host teacher reported that the mini-lesson did not go as she expected. She said,“I don’t think they got it. I don’t think they knew what I was talking about.” “I think they understood it,” responded the coach, “I just don’t think they were able to articulate it.” The teacher remained uneasy and the coach remarked that they could continue the conversation later. Right now, they needed to pick a child with whom one of the teachers could conference while the others observed the conferencing. Not all of the teachers had tried to conference yet, and the coach asked for a volunteer from that group. One teacher stepped forward and the host teacher suggested a boy for the conference.

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[20] “Buzzing” is the term used to describe students conferencing with one another.

The teachers all gathered around the student to listen to the conference which took place only a couple of minutes after the mini-lesson ended. The coach took an active, but not dominant role in the conference and, by doing so, demonstrated for the teachers some of the strategies that can help students articulate what they know.

> Teacher K asked, "What are you reading?" and the student showed her the cover page of the book. It was a book about a boy and girl who stay over night in a museum. The student pointed to the characters on the cover and explained that the girl's parents were mistreating her and so she ran away. The two children are locked in this museum and trying to figure out something about a statue. Teacher K asked, "Are they brother and sister?" and the student says, "Yes." Then Teacher K asked, "Are they staying in the museum over night?" and the student reported that they had not intended to stay over. He said, "They didn't mean to, but now they are locked in." Teacher K asked, "Have you come up with any questions about your book?" and the student answered, "No," explaining that he had already read the book and, therefore, did not have any questions about it. Teacher K replied, "Oh, so you've read this book already. So you know how it's going to end."
>
> At this point, the coach stepped into the conversation and said to the student, "I have such a hard time believing that you don't have any questions because you always have such good conversations about your books. Can you tell us one question you may have thought about?" In reply to the coach's question, the student reported, "Well, I wondered why they were so interested in the statue." Teacher K then asked, "What about the title? Does that have anything to do with the statue?" The student replied, "Yeah. The statue is a pretty big thing in this book." The coach now says, "Well then that's a fat question [referring back to "I wondered why they were so interested in the statue?] because you can follow it throughout the whole book. You could be marking every time something comes up about the statue. Have you been using your Post-Its?" When the student said, "No," the coach stressed the importance of using them while reading through the text.
>
> Now the host teacher said to the student, "Do you know where you should put your Post-Its?" The student knew and replied, "When I don't understand something. When I need to ask a question." The coach concluded by saying to the student, "You have good questions. You just need to learn how to use the Post-Its to keep track of them. You should use a Post-It every time you think to yourself, "Why are they so interested in this statue?" Anytime you come to something related to that, you should make a Post-It." The student agreed to start using the Post-Its and the conference ended with the coach having modeled for the teachers a strategy for conferencing with a student.

This lab-site continued with two more student conferences in which the coach interjected comments and questions when appropriate.

> Then, while the students were still reading, the coach facilitated a quick debrief that focused on whether the students were able to develop fat questions that related to their books. Early in this conversation, Teacher K, who had done the first conference, said that some of the students were already asking themselves in-depth/fat questions. However, she wondered whether they were

> sharing their questions with other students when they buzzed. As a result of the lab-site, she now thinks that teachers have to do more modeling. The coach agreed, saying that she did not think students realized when they asked big questions; they formulated them but could not articulate them. The coach was not convinced, however, that the students would be helped by hearing each other's fat questions because they were not familiar with one another's books, and, therefore, would not be able to understand why the fat question was, indeed, a good fat question in light of the book.
>
> The coach did agree, however, that the teachers should try some additional modeling of fat questions using short pieces of text. She suggested that they work on modeling for the next inquiry session and she identified a professional reading on the topic saying, "I've actually been thinking that there is a chapter in here about 'giving our students tools to access text.' I think it might work really well for this. Let's read it for next week." The teachers agreed and also noted that time was running out. The demonstrating teacher wanted to bring the students back together; the coach suggested that they turn and buzz with their partners while the lesson was still fresh. That is what they did.

It will always require skillful judgment on the part of a coach to determine when and how to take an active role in a lab-site. The coach must consider ways in which to actively coach teachers without creating too much dependency on the part of teachers. For example, a coach would not want to create a situation in which she, as the coach, did all the reflective thinking work for the group. Instead, the coach would want to help foster teachers' own independent learning. Taking on an active coaching role also requires the coach's skillful judgment to determine when to remain quiet in the face of a lesson that is not going well or that presents the coach with multiple, prime coaching moments. Coaches' own personalities and propensities as well as the culture of the CCL group influence such decisions.

In example three, however, we want to point out the value that a coach can bring to the lab-site when she decides to take an active role in directing teachers in ways that may improve their practice. We also want to note and caution readers that having the coach take on an active role in the lab-site does not necessarily lead to thoughtful conversations and deep reflections around instruction. In this lab-site, as in others, for a number of different reasons, such issues do not often reach the debrief table for further discussion.

Debriefing the Lab-Site/Planning Next Steps. The BPE was particularly interested in the extent to which the debriefs following a lab-site experience were getting deeper with respect to teachers' ability to a) reflect on the practice that they observed, and b) consider its implications for instruction and, perhaps, for their next steps. Our data strongly suggest that the debrief component of CCL has not yet become a locus for serious consideration of practice.[21]

Coaches in our sample were clear about the purpose of the debrief component of CCL and understood why, in theory, it should occur immediately after a lab-site. Coach A, for example, was able to accurately describe the purpose of the debriefs including the importance of focusing on what all of the teachers in the cycle can learn from the observation. However, in framing her explanation, Coach A alluded to the reasons why teachers, and, indeed the coaches, may have difficulty implementing this component of the CCL model.

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[21] As we described earlier, however, inquiry sessions seem to have developed as places in which teachers reflect on instruction.

> I think the purpose of the debrief is for all of us to come back, to come out with something, for every teacher, not just the demonstrating teacher. Because if it's all about the demonstrating teacher, then it becomes, you're bordering on evaluation, and you're bordering on less collaboration. I don't see the lab-site as us going in and the demonstrating teacher doing a lesson, and having us - critiquing isn't the word I want to use, but I will use it because I can't think of another word now. I think the lab-site is an opportunity for us, because we're not doing the teaching ourselves, to think about practice. Not that person's particular practice, but our practice as well, what we might be doing at this point in time. And to look at children, because they're not our kids. So we can be purely objective about looking at kids, and how they're responding. So it gives us an opportunity to stand outside of ourselves, and look at it. **And I think that the debrief should come back to everyone's practice, not just the practice of the demonstrating teacher.** Otherwise, I guess there is growth, but [I ask] is the growth going to turn up in your classroom? Is it going to go back to your classroom? Coach A

Despite the clarity of this description of the ideal debrief practice, debriefs did not happen as designed because, as our data strongly suggest, teachers feared a) being criticized, and b) criticizing others. Regardless of how well the collaborative culture had developed within an inquiry group, teachers reported being uncomfortable discussing their colleagues' practice immediately after observing it as this administrator noted.

> Usually at the end of the lab-site you'll get a comment like, "That was excellent." And I know it wasn't excellent, and I believe they know it wasn't excellent either. But – I don't know if it's superficial or we're not at that place yet. ... [not at a place] where people can take constructive criticism and feedback and use it to get better. We're not there at all. Principal E [22]

Coaches reported similar experiences.

> For me, that is the hardest part about CCL, is that what I really want to say is "That's not really Writer's Workshop" but I don't want to embarrass her, and I don't really want to say that, and I do want to give her credit for what she's tried. And that is a very hard part of all of this. Then I don't want the other teachers to

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[22] All Principals, Assistant Principals and Directors of Instruction are coded as "Principals" in order to keep their identities confidential.

> hear that and think "Oh, I could do that too [when it is not workshop]." And that's a hard situation to be in. Coach D

Teachers in our sample stressed the importance of using the debrief to support rather than criticize their colleagues. Their comments suggest that Principal E might be correct in concluding that teachers "are not at that place yet" where they can discuss practice without viewing the discussion as negative and personal.

> We tried to be very positive. I mean if somebody volunteers to do something like that, I try not to get too much on the what didn't work part, because who would want to volunteer to do it if you thought you were just going to be criticized. Teacher Z
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> We usually start with the host classroom talking about what she thought of her lesson. And then it's enhanced by everyone else, saying, "You did a great job. I'm working with this one, this is what is happening." And somebody might say, "I went back yesterday and used that, and this is what happened."...We never want to make them feel like they've done anything wrong. I mean, they have never done anything wrong. We all do it differently. Teacher I
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> Well, I guess we just listened to comments from other teachers on anything they saw in the lab site. It's mostly positive, or if they have any questions about what happened specifically in the class, that type of thing. [Questions like:] Why did you choose that particular student? What had that student done before at the lab-site and where did you go with it afterwards? That's about it I guess; just activities that they had observed in the classroom. Teacher U
>
> I'm not quite comfortable, or that comfortable, in terms of bringing up – I don't know how to put it – saying, "Okay, this might be a better way to do it." So in a sense, kind of not respecting what the teacher does. But definitely we discuss teaching and the curriculum, and about using this Workshop. Teacher I
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> We had a pre-conference and then a debrief afterwards, but the debrief – it was more on what they saw. "I saw this. I observed this. I observed that. I'll use that." Not so much, "Hey, you know, you could change this," or, "Here's another idea." It was never that. It was always, this is what I saw, this is what I'll use. Teacher P

Why is it so difficult to have productive debrief discussions? One possibility is that teachers do not yet have the language or discourse patterns with which to discuss teaching – either theirs or their colleagues – as distinct from the teacher who did the teaching. This may make it especially difficult for them to talk about the lesson they have observed immediately after having seen it since they do not have time to choose their words carefully. It may be easier for teachers to wait several days and then reflect on the lab-site in the relative safety of their inquiry group. In addition, coaches may still fear that if they identify areas of teaching that might be in need of improvement they will lose the trust of the teachers with whom they are working, that they will be seen as evaluators. We do not know whether these explanations are adequate for what we have seen and heard, however, we know that productive debriefs are rare even when the demonstrating teacher herself identifies what she sees as a problem with her lesson. To make this point, we turn to an example in which the demonstrating teacher reported that the lesson had not led to the outcome in student learning that she had intended.

> The coach began the debrief by asking the demonstrating teacher how she thought the lesson had gone. The teacher replied, "I had had a question about whether that book would bring out their schema and it didn't work out the way I thought it would. We never made the connection between sounds they heard at night and the book sounds. The book didn't lead them down the road I thought it would.... Sometimes as a teacher you have a road that you want to go down and they don't go there."

Although this teacher's self-reflection provided the opening for a deeper discussion about how the book itself or the way in which she used it might have contributed to the identified problem, neither the coach nor the teachers followed up on the teacher's reflection. Instead, one of the teachers in the group immediately suggested that it might be too soon to know whether the lesson failed. She said,

> "When they go to this story again, maybe they can find themselves in it more." Then, she shifted the focus of the conversation to the conferences she had with students after the mini-lesson to demonstrate that the students were, indeed, using the strategy, "When I went to the independent reading they were using their schema and they could say what they were using." The rest of the conversation focused on how well the students were able to apply their schema to the independent reading. No one addressed the teacher's reflection on her practice.

There was yet another missed opportunity in this debrief to reflect on the lab-site lesson with respect to the follow-up, independent component of the Workshop format in which the teacher asked the students to use their schema when reading independently in their guided reading texts. According to the coach, guided reading texts were not a good choice for the follow-up because the children had read and discussed them thoroughly in prior guided reading lessons. As a result, they would not actually be applying what they had learned in the mini-lessons to new texts which they would need to comprehend on their own. The independent reading time, in other words, would provide neither the students nor the teachers with the opportunity to learn about how well the children were able to apply their schema to improve their comprehension when reading independently. The inability of the group to fully address either the problem the teacher herself brought up or the issue the coach could have raised – which books might have served better in the follow-up to the mini-lesson – meant that this debrief was less powerful as a teacher learning opportunity than it might have been. The coach seemed well-aware of the limits of the debrief conversation.

> I think Teacher C solved her own dilemma, or recognized what she thought was not working well. I'm not sure that the other members came out with anything

> about that. They came out with, they saw something, a practice in the classroom that they may go and emulate in their classroom. They may take a book and they may talk about sentences. When Teacher C said, "It didn't go the way I wanted it to," and she actually again talked about text yesterday, about how you can think you have the right text, and you start to work with it, and you see there is a whole different twist to this. Did they [the other teachers] come out with that? Unless they articulate that, I don't know. I also think that another key piece, which ties into this, is the ability of the kids to apply what they have within the lesson. And I think the application would be more meaningful in independent text. Coach A

We did observe a debrief session in which both a teacher and the coach attempted to provide specific, thoughtfully critical feedback to a teacher who had done a lab-site demonstration. The feedback addressed two issues about a lesson that had focused on reading and writing poetry. With respect to the first issue, the demonstrating teacher revealed that she was disappointed in the very literal, low-level response that a student gave in response to the question, "What inspired this poem?" The coach asked the teacher to think about how else she might have asked the question so that it would have elicited a more thoughtful answer. Neither the demonstrating teacher nor any other teacher responded to the coach's question, (although the coach's wait-time was minimal), and the coach then offered some suggestions. When the coach finished, the demonstrating teacher said, "Yes, that would have worked better." No one else was engaged in the discussion. We feel it is important to note, however, that the teacher did not appear to have been rebuffed by the coach's reply which, in fact, addressed her question.

The second issue was raised by an observing teacher who noted that the mini-lesson which the host teacher taught was not really the mini-lesson but a warm-up exercise. The coach agreed leaving the demonstrating teacher confused and asking, "It wasn't?" In response, the coach reviewed the purpose of a mini-lesson and described how something the teacher did later in the demonstration lesson was actually the mini-lesson. The host teacher neither objected to nor asked questions about the coach's explanation and, as a result, it was not clear what she or the others learned from the discussion. No other teacher spoke during this part of the debrief. When the debrief continued with a question from the demonstrating teacher about how she could have improved the lesson, only one teacher offered a comment. For the rest of the session, the coach did all of the talking; no one else seemed ready to participate; and the debrief stopped short of linking what was observed to what teachers might take away from the lab-site experience. Nonetheless, we include this example because the coach and observing teacher attempted to use the debrief for the purpose of developing deeper reflection on teaching through offering critical feedback, and, as such, this debrief could have been viewed by the teachers as too harsh or evaluative. However, we know from conversations with the coach later in the year that it did not damage her relationship with the teachers. Still, they remained reticent about participating in debrief conversations that actually focused on the instruction observed during a lab-site.

We present one more example from a debrief to stress the prevalence of the challenges facing coaches and teachers as they implement this component of CCL. In the first demonstration lesson that we described, Example 1 on page 23, the teacher's goal was to help students identify the main point in a piece of text. Neither the mini-lesson nor the students' follow-up work, however, focused explicitly on this teaching point. The coach was aware of the limitations of the mini-lesson and yet was unable to make it a topic of conversation in the debrief. At the start of the debrief, other teachers in the lab-site commented positively on how the teacher had given every child in the group an opportunity to answer, how students appeared to be comfortable providing answers, and how the teacher had made some connections between the story and the children's personal lives. They also discussed the value of her having provided the children with vocabulary words at the outset. After a few minutes, the coach, reminding the group that the teaching point of the lesson had been finding the main idea, asked the teacher who demonstrated whether she thought the students had been able to find the main idea after reading on their own. As part of the same remark, she also said, "How do we bring the teaching point back into the share? How can we make sure that they know how to find the main idea? The share is important because that's when we see if the kids learned what we taught them." In response, the teacher who demonstrated said that she thought the students did very well. The coach then said, "Great job. Your timing was perfect." The debrief was over.

Perhaps, in this instance, given a teacher who had been hesitant to demonstrate, this was the best approach for the coach to take. However, this level of discussion occurred even when teachers brought up questions about their own teaching in the lab-site to the debrief table. In presenting the examples above we want to emphasize a) how difficult it is for coaches and teachers to actually talk about teaching and therefore gain value from demonstrating as well as observing, and consequently, and b) that the debrief component of CCL needs to be strengthened in order to increase the potential of CCL as professional development.

We are not sure whether the explanation we offered above – the need for coaches and teachers to learn a new way of talking about their teaching – is adequate or even accurate for all of the cycles we observed. We know that due to the challenge of scheduling debriefs, many of those we observed and/or heard about were quite brief. That may explain some of the limitation of debrief conversations. However, we think the explanation related to discourse, as well as others deserve further consideration so that a) the problem will be better understood, and b) coaches and teachers can develop strategies with which to effectively participate in debrief reflections.

Summary: Implementing the Lab-Sites. The data presented from the eight lab-sites we studied, in our view, well represents the complex work teachers have taken on in implementing Readers' and Writers' Workshop and participating in CCL as a school-based, instructionally focused approach to collaborative professional development. The teachers, principals and coaches engaged in this work remain pioneers. The fact that implementation of Workshop instruction and CCL are not, just yet, expert, should not been seen as a failing of either the models or of the teachers, coaches and principals who are implementing them. In fact, we strongly urge the BPE, the BPS and all of the principals, teachers, and coaches who read this report to remember how far the teachers represented in our sample have come and, indeed, how far their colleagues in other schools have come in developing teaching strategies that should better serve their students and in immersing themselves, with their colleagues, in a brand-new approach to professional development.

At the end of Year I of CCL, we were encouraged by how much teachers and principals had accomplished in implementing this new coaching model for the first time. We wrote about impact in relation to adoption and acceptance of the coaching model. We remain encouraged by how much further these teachers and principals have come by the end of Year II. Even while acknowledging that there is still quite a way for them to go, we believe students have greatly increased opportunities to learn. As a result of the progress made in Year II, we have evidence that suggests how CCL is having an impact on teachers' knowledge and skill with respect to instruction and, importantly, on their perceptions of themselves as continuous learners.

IMPACT

There were intimations of the impact of CCL during Year I, but our data from Year II show a marked increase in the breadth and depth of positive testimony regarding the coaching model This testimony comes not only from teachers who participated eagerly in the cycles, but also from some of the teachers who were initially resistant. In Year II, teachers described how CCL was changing they way they thought about teaching and learning, causing them to be more reflective about their day-to-day and long-term instructional planning. They talked about the impact of the coaching model on their relationships with their colleagues, and some teachers reported that they were starting to see an impact on their students as well, noting an increase in the level of student engagement as well as the quality of student work.[23]

Testimony also comes from the principals and coaches who point to teachers' increasing interest in developing courses of study for their next cycle and desire to continue to work collaboratively. They, too, note instructional improvements among individual teachers as well as grade level teams. And, they report that even teachers who overtly resisted the CCL and other professional development opportunities in Year 1, began to embrace them by the end of Year II.

We recognize that testimony, in and of itself, is not ultimately a sufficient indication of impact. However, we think that the testimony coupled with the examples of teachers' work and professional conversation that we presented in the Implementation section of this report and will present now in the Impact section are compelling. Both sets of data contribute to what we consider to be the growing influence of CCL and Workshop on teachers' developing understanding of a) how children learn, b) how they themselves learn, and, as a result, c) how they must learn to teach children so that they will achieve at the high standards set by the BPS and the state that are required for successful progress throughout and after their schooling is complete.[24]

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[23] A very small number of respondents said they experienced no benefits from participating in the CCL and felt that the model was a waste of time and money. Some of these individuals said that the CCL did not meet their individual learning needs; others said that it was not worth missing their class or preparation time; still others were simply uncertain about the value of observing their colleagues' or coach's teaching.

In this section we focus on four areas of impact: 1) increased teacher understanding of CCL as a learning opportunity, 2) increased teacher commitment to their professional development, 3) increased teacher collaboration around instruction, and 4) evidence of improved instructional practice.

Impact 1: Increased Teacher Understanding of CCL as a Learning Process

By the end of Year II, most teachers had gained an increased understanding of and appreciation for CCL as a learning opportunity. No doubt, this growing awareness stemmed from the increased number of teachers who had participated in one or more cycles. But this finding is also, in part, the result of principals', coaches,' and the BPE's ongoing efforts to articulate more clearly the rationale behind CCL. For example, in Year II, principals and coaches had available resources such as the BPE's "Getting Started," a document that provided them with valuable, experience-based information about how the various components of the CCL work and how and why schools' varied their implementation approaches during the first year. In addition, principals and coaches understood more about CCL and its component parts as a result of having implemented it during Year I. Indeed, some of the coaches helped produce "Getting Started," and many coaches had spent time observing one another and sharing ideas about CCL implementation.

School-based efforts to introduce new teachers to CCL, and in some cases new coaches to staff already familiar with CCL, provided additional opportunities for teachers to raise questions and concerns about the coaching model. Given their Year I experiences as well as these opportunities to clarify further the design and purpose of their professional development, it is not surprising that in Year II, teachers, principals and coaches spent less time figuring out what they were supposed to be doing and more time actively engaging in the work of instructional improvement.

> This group which I traditionally have such a hard time with, some of the same individuals that really resisted before are kind of coming around. I think partially they are used to CCL. They know [about it] coming in. I don't have to explain why we have this inquiry component... They...are just going to do it. [That] the whole school is further along in CCL helps that a lot. ... None of that is a struggle so much anymore. Coach B

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[24] Given the multitude of resources that the BPE and the BPS have devoted to literacy-focused teacher professional development in the last two years, it will remain difficult, if not impossible, to discern to what degree changes in practice and, ultimately in student achievement, should be attributed directly and solely to the CCL model. We think it is more fruitful to consider how CCL contributes to the coherence of the district's instructional reform by focusing on the ways in which CCL supports teachers in effectively implementing Workshop strategies in their classrooms.

> I think it's much more effective [this year]. One of the concerns we had last year was, I could never get my teachers to the point to take over before the cycle ended. I think a combination of them having the second year around, and the fact the cycle lasted eight weeks, has really made the shift, I think, for teachers to take more responsibility for the lab-sites. Principal C

Many of the teachers in our sample reported feeling "more comfortable" working with the coach, which, in some cases led to a more productive coach-teacher working relationship in Year II. In addition, some teachers noted that the coaches were more skillful in their second year of CCL, while some teachers preferred the style of the coach they had in Year II.[25] Finally, most, but not all teachers, preferred the longer eight-week cycle to the six-week schedule, noting that they had more time to plan and reflect on their courses of study in Year II.

> Compared to last year? I don't think it's different in the way that we run it too much. But I feel that I do notice, myself and the rest of my colleagues, that we're more comfortable now, and we're open to asking questions, and we know, what to expect of our literacy coach, you know. ... We know that if we ask questions, and we want more information or are looking for more money in order to get supplies in the classroom, we know now that we feel more comfortable that we can ask her. ... I think we're more comfortable in really just asking her, and using her as a resource, more than we were last year. Teacher AA

> The coach stays on topic. She is like very clear about what's going to happen, states the purpose of why we're there, and we follow the format. She gives us maybe a little agenda and we have discussions. Then she sums it all up in the end, and you know where you're going to begin the next time. She's very good at her timing and her clarity and knowing what we're there for. But last year we were all over the place. We had no idea what was going on. Teacher G

While they valued the coach more in Year II, at the same time, some of the teachers in our sample came to rely less on the coach than they had during the first year of implementation. Like students immersed in Readers' and Writers' Workshop, these teachers began to assume greater responsibility for their own learning in Year II. Therefore, while the coach continued to play an important role in facilitating their professional development, as in the lab-sites described above, the CCL no longer revolved solely around the coaches' expertise.

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[25] A number of schools had a different coach in Year II. In some cases, the change was at the request of the school; in others it resulted from coaches deciding to work for the BPS rather than for the BPE; and in yet others, it resulted from additional coaches being assigned to work in large schools. Our data lead us to conclude that the coaches in our sample, by the end of Year II if not sooner, had established good working relations with the teachers in their schools. The ease or difficulty of the transition to a new coach depended on the particular expectations in place in the schools and the extent to which those expectations matched-well with the approach and expectations of the school's new coach.

> I think last year we were more into "you show us" type of thing, you know, "you do most of the talking. You tell us what we need to do." "You" - meaning the coach. Because we didn't know what the coach, we didn't know what they were doing in our school, and what they wanted from us. But this year, we're saying "Look, you're part of us now." Now we're sitting together at one table and we're talking the same level. We're not saying "I don't know how to do this" and she's not saying "I know how to." We're just working as a whole group now, rather than just one side listening and trying to figure out what the next step is. And it feels to me it's more valuable now, because we're all talking the same language. We all know what we're supposed to do when we go in there. We understand where we are now, and we are quite capable of saying "This is what I want, this is what I'm doing. Now, you know, let me know if you have any other ideas." Where last year it was "I don't know what I'm doing. Tell me what I'm doing. Help me." Teacher I

> No, the coach is not [providing me with mini-lesson plans day-to-day]. But we're setting up a plan in our meeting, and I'm going to work from that plan. And then the next time I sit down with her she will ask, "How did it go? What do you think you could have done differently? What went well? What didn't go well? Well, here is something you can try." She doesn't criticize, but she certainly suggests-- And she's good. She doesn't tell you, she doesn't give you answers, she kind of draws it from you.... [I don't really like that]. I'd like to be spoon fed. She makes me work ... I mean, do I like it? No, because you've got to work. But, is it more beneficial? Yes, it is. Teacher BB

> We had all grown so dependent on the coach last year. She was just doing so much work. She'd do model lessons. She was just here. Like "[Coach], I need books. Can you get me these books?" "[Coach], come and sit in my room and tell me how I can conference with this kid." "Coach, Coach, Coach!" you know? She was just everywhere, and she did everything.... But, [this year] I find our new coach extremely helpful....But I don't depend on her the way that I depended on the coach last year. And frankly, it's time for people to move on and develop more independently. Teacher H

Teachers recognize that they can use what they have learned in this form of professional development. As such, they recognize the value of the model for themselves and for their colleagues.

> I think when we go in there, when we go into the host site, we really see some amazing teaching going on, and it really makes you think how can I do this in my classroom? I can do this in my classroom. And to see it in a classroom, rather than just taking a class in it, is very effective. It gets you excited to try new things out in your own classroom, or try new methodologies out in your own classroom. Teacher H

> I really do think that the CCL model is probably the best professional development I've done just because it's more practical, it's really hands on, and you can take things from it and use it right away. So I have enjoyed it the most, and it gives you time to talk and think about things with your colleagues, which you really don't have a lot of time to do. So that set time really made it possible for that to happen, that collaborating with each other. Teacher A

Teachers' growing understanding of the coach role and of CCL as a complex process, coupled with their growing independence as learners are, in our view, indicators of the positive impact of CCL on teachers' development as learners. Teachers are aware of the impact of the coaching model even if, as this teacher observes, it "forces" them to make changes in their practice.

> Well, [CCL] is very helpful because we are – I don't mean to use a term like "forced," – but at the same time we are in a situation where you have to apply what you have learned. You cannot just put it away. And traditionally, like years ago, we went to this course that we took. What we learned, we practiced it when we had the time or when it fit into what we were doing, our schedule. But this way [with CCL] we don't have a choice, so we have to practice what we learn and it's very helpful... [because]... it's right in the school and we are using our children as our guinea pigs, you know? I mean, this way of learning is more effective than just sitting in a college classroom. Teacher J

Given that Boston's theory of action rests on improving teaching and that improving teaching depends on engaging teachers as learners in high quality professional development, we think this finding indicates another positive impact of CCL.

Impact 2: Increased Commitment to and Ownership of Professional Development.

If teachers had an increased role in designing their courses of study and inquiry focus, as we described in the implementation section of this report, one could reasonably ask: What difference did that increased role make on their work? What was its impact? And, did that increased participation in and of itself represent a Year II CCL success?

With respect to the first question, in the implementation section of this report, we wrote about the difference that participation in selecting the course of study and inquiry focus made to teachers, describing their conclusion that, as a result of their direct involvement in the selection process, their professional development work was more relevant and engaging because it came out of their needs. With respect to the second question, principals' comments support the hypothesis that increased participation indicates a success of the CCL model. As these two principals note, they no longer needed to "push" for teacher involvement in Year II and, as a corollary, their teachers were more willing to apply the Workshop strategies to content areas other than English language arts.

> There isn't any real need for me to push [for participation]. Last year I needed to

> push, but this year I didn't need to push. I put up sheets in the office and people just signed up. Teams of teachers - grade level teams - would just sign up on their own because they wanted to do it. ... And they continue to do it on their own – This whole notion of learning from each other has really taken root, I would say, among a good 70% of the teachers. There's still those [teachers] you kind of have to nudge and push, but on the whole, I think a lot of them wanted to do it. ... And if they didn't have CCL next year, they would miss it. Principal D

> I feel good about the translation of Readers' and Writers' Workshop into the content areas, because they're focusing on math now, but they've worked with the social studies teachers in writing and worked with the science teachers in writing. I think that's really good. It isn't just your English language arts folks, it's really trying to connect to the content. I think every one has been affected. I was very happy about that. Principal A

Teachers, too, described the developing impact of commitment and ownership to their work during Year II.

> It was easier this year because the whole school really bought into the idea, everyone was more committed to it - it made it easier to schedule coverage and to have consistent coverage for classes. ... Scheduling is not an issue this year. Teacher Y

> Since last year [the CCL] has really become refined. You have to be very well planned out. Hand-outs help. And hosting helps you focus your thinking, focus your lesson. We've gotten good at it! Last year, I just kind of shot from the hip and I don't know, I guess I didn't really understand the whole concept of what it was. This year I know exactly what I'm doing ... it's much more refined. It's much more smoothly operated. Teacher H

Increased commitment of the kind that teachers and principals describe is a positive impact because it represents a shift in ownership of professional development from those outside of the classroom to those inside, to the teachers. It demonstrates that teachers have come to realize, first, that they have instructional strategies that they want to learn, and second, that they have a structure and process in which to learn them. This is a great step forward in a profession in which it has not been the norm to ask for professional development support as this long-time Boston teacher movingly notes.

> When I first began, for years and years and years you never came out of your classroom. You never talked about teaching. You never talked about strategies or lessons or any philosophy you had. There were no workshops that I remember in Boston. If there were, they weren't really encouraged. But I'll be honest, in the last five or six years, Payzant [the superintendent] created a real upheaval with a focus on professional development and zeroing in on the curriculum. [Now we ask] how are we going to teach this? What do we need to do this? The latest

> research has truly changed my teaching. ...I mean all these years I never asked for anything. I brought out the same counting beads every year and I had the same basal readers and now it's a total involvement. We never thought we had a right to say "I don't really understand. I'm not sure. I need to take a workshop." We always had to pretend for some reason that we knew what we were doing.
> Teacher C

Certainly, Boston's district-wide systemic reform agenda has played a significant, positive role in changing the adult learning context in the district. The focus on instruction and the development of a school-based, instructionally focused professional culture led to the development of the coaching model and the use of Workshop that have changed teachers' perspectives on themselves as learners. And, the changes, where they have occurred, are profound. The fact that teachers now realize that a) they can admit they do not know everything and b) can use CCL as a vehicle to shape their learning, is an extraordinary impact of CCL embedded, as it is, in the district's reform agenda.

When teachers truly believe that it is acceptable, expected, and safe for them to ask for professional development help, in our view, CCL has accomplished a significant goal with respect to the district's reform agenda. And, when teachers ask for help and get it in the form of a focused cycle, they have evidence of the value they bring to their own learning.

> For a couple of years I've been saying, "I really want to get into comprehension. I really want to learn more about comprehension." Because so much of our initial stages of literacy professional development was around early stages of reading that when the children in grade two begin to shift into chapter books and more complicated stories and plots, I wanted to know more about what good readers do as they begin to comprehend more... And I mentioned that and the other [grade-level] teachers seemed to feel that would be something they would be interested in also, which I consider very powerful and exciting, that it comes from the need of the teachers. And that's where your involvement is really intensified because it's what you're interested in and what you feel a need for in your teaching.
> Teacher C
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> We are really happy because this is the topic the group has chosen, not [been] told to do. And we are ready for this topic. We are dying to know more about how to improve our mini-lessons. This is exactly where we are at, so... it's moving us forward further, to a more in-depth understanding. Teacher CC
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> I thought the cycle was very well planned out, especially for [our] team. I like the fact that we got to choose topics that we felt we needed to focus on and I like that this year's CCL was consistent with the Whole-School-Improvement Plan. Because we really got the basics [of Readers' and Writers' Workshop] down last year [and so] we were able to choose more specific focuses this year. In this year's CCL we really had an opportunity to build upon what was already

> established last year. Teacher Y

Coaches and principals recognize the value inherent in the fact that teachers are taking on more responsibility for creating their own lab-site groups, developing courses of study, and outlining what the eight-week cycles will look like.

> What we're finding this year, the difference is people are more comfortable with it, people are crafting the focus how they want to do it to suit their needs better. They're not afraid to really put it out there. [They will say:] Well, I don't want to do it [a particular course of study], not because I don't feel like doing the CCL, but because I feel that doing this [other course of study] will really answer my questions. Principal D

> I think they can come up with a course of study. I don't have to give them a course of study. I don't have to elicit a course of study. I come in day one and they already have three ideas for what they think the course of study could be. And they've planned it before. They know I'm coming, they know we're going to work together in a cycle and they're already ready for me. Coach B

> [The focus] really just comes out of discussions generated by teachers. We talk about two areas, we talk about it in terms of Workshop. We have the Readers' Workshop, the Writers' Workshop. Let's look at the components of each. Which of the two Workshops do you feel you want to focus on in this lab site? Which do you feel you would like more support with? And that's how we start. Principal C

In identifying the impact that CCL has had on teachers' interest in and capacity to develop the focus of their professional development work, we do not want to give the impression that their choices are made absent the insights of coaches and/or principals. As Principal C points out in her comment above, the focus is shaped by teachers in the context of the literacy work that is ongoing in the school. Principals and coaches still have an important role to play in guiding teachers' professional development work and teachers do not report that they object to principals' involvement in the planning discussions. After all, coaches and principals, too, know a great deal more about implementing both CCL and Workshop in this second year.

With respect to teachers having a greater role in selecting the focus of their professional development, we want to note that this positive turn of events has implications for principals and their roles as instructional leaders. If teachers are to take a greater role in designing their work, by definition, principals are going to have a different, perhaps lesser role in designing their schools' professional development. Principals will have to accept a greater leadership role for teachers and figure out how to ensure that the choices they make are congruent with the schools' needs.[26]

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[26] The development of distributed leadership, in other words, one of Boston's Essentials, is being achieved, in part, by this impact of CCL.

All four of the principals in our sample understand their changing role with respect to teachers' professional development and they point out what it sometimes means to them to "let go" of their Year I role in this work. On the one hand, they need to be ready to support teachers in taking on a professional development leadership role, and, on the other hand, they must be ready to deal with the consequences if they realize after a few weeks that the focus chosen by the teachers is not quite what they needed.

> [Teachers are free to choose whatever course of study they want] within reason. They always check with me, and they say, "I want to focus on this." And I ask them, "Why?" And in some cases, I nudge them in a different route. Like, we made a mistake with one group - kind of halfway through the cycle, the coach and I realized that non-fiction was the wrong topic. They wanted to do it, but they were not ready for it, and I thought, we should have done independent reading before we jumped into that. But in their [teachers'] mind, they thought they were ready. And as they went [through the cycle], they said, "Oh, we don't even know how to do that [independent reading.]" If you have a classroom, but you don't have a tight library, or you don't have routines or buddy reading, it's very difficult to go into a genre [like non-fiction]. You can't have that focus if you don't have the other things in place. So now the coach is working with some of those teachers again, because now they're ready to do a tighter focus on a genre because they have those other things in place. Principal D
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> What happened was, with one grade, they thought they had Readers' Workshop down, so they went to writing. But then, they had a meeting and people realized that there were gaps [in what they knew]. So, they shifted back [to reading]. I was thrilled. I had to bite my tongue when they decided to do writing. They really needed a lot more support in guided reading and independent reading and things like that in [their] grade. But it was nice that they came to the recognition themselves. Principal C

The way in which these principals talked about their role in CCL as well as of the teachers' role, suggests that the coaching model has had an impact on them as well as on their teachers.

For example, in Year I, because CCL was new, principals believed that the first cycles had to go well if CCL were to stand a chance of becoming an accepted approach to professional development. The principals' comments above suggest that during Year II, if necessary, they could let teachers make mistakes because they would learn from them and make better decisions the next time. This was not always easy. As Principal C notes, she had to "bite her tongue" at the choice her teachers made, but it was worth the cost of a weak start to a cycle to have the teachers themselves identify and then later alter their focus to better suit their needs.

These principals' comments lead us to conclude that during Year II, CCL was well-enough accepted as a productive professional development strategy that teachers could be in a cycle that was not going well and understand that it was not the fault of the coaching model or coach, but rather their own error in choosing a focus. As learners responsible for their own learning, they could identify and accept the problem and make corrections. And, knowing how much teachers had grown in their CCL work, principals could provide teachers with the freedom to make some errors, confident that, as actively engaged learners, they would themselves seek to make changes that would improve their professional development.[27]

We consider these findings related to teachers' roles in crafting their cycles to be strong evidence that CCL is having a genuine and important impact on the professional culture in schools as well as on what teachers are actually choosing to learn.

Impact 3: Increased Teacher Collaboration Around Instruction.

CCL provides teachers with the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues around specific issues of practice. While other professional development efforts such as Looking At Student Work (LASW) also bring teachers together around instructional issues, they do not have the capacity to provide as rich a context for teacher collaboration as does CCL. While LASW can help teachers better understand the standards for student work, the rubrics by which it should be judged, and the kinds of assignments that produce better student learning opportunities, even when LASW is done expertly, it does not bring teachers into collaborative contact as broadly or as deeply as does CCL. This broad and deep collaborative work has had an impact on teachers' understanding and support of one another.

We find evidence for this in the fact that as teachers participated in more and more CCL cycles, they became knowledgeable about how each of them approached working with students using the Workshop model. They began to understand their colleagues' classroom contexts and recognized that much of their work was similar. Furthermore, as teachers hosted demonstration lessons and conferenced with each others' students, they came to realize that they and their students would benefit if they planned more of their work in common. In Year II of CCL, teachers talked about these impacts of working collaboratively with their colleagues. We consider their comments as indicators of CCL's positive impact.

> I like it better working with other teachers, because you get ideas from them, they get ideas from you, and you can discuss what we're doing, because [in the cycle] we all were doing the same thing. There's more feedback, and it's more, you know, helpful... And when the cycle was over, it didn't stop there. That continued, you know, in the classroom, because [you learned] something new to

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[27] With teachers who were still somewhat resistant to CCL and to Workshop, coaches and principals continued to have greater input into the development and implementation of the lab-sites so that they were productive, positive experiences for these teachers that would, hopefully, lead to the positive outcomes experienced by their colleagues.

> work with. Teacher D

> I feel like [the CCL has changed my relationship with other teachers] - I don't know how to explain it, but I feel like we're all pretty much on the same page. We know where we want to get. We know what we need to do. And we're doing it together. And so we have that support. Teacher AA

In the first year of CCL implementation, teachers who had participated in a cycle would exchange ideas at lunch, in the hallways, and/or before and after school. Teachers maintained these kinds of informal collaborations in Year II, and continued to comment on the value of problem-solving with colleagues and sharing resource materials across classrooms. And, during Year II, this collaborative work became more consistent and comprehensive. For example, some CCL groups created school-specific curriculum calendars, pacing guides, and grade-level-specific standards designed to ensure that students achieve a certain set of skills before advancing to the next grade level. These efforts were meant to produce consistency within and across grade levels and, according to some teachers, were also helping schools develop a sense of collective ownership for instructional improvement.

> [The value of watching demonstration lessons in other teachers' classrooms] is to see the similarities and where the gaps are. Because it really did seem like there were areas that all of the kids were having trouble with. And then to see how that consistency was coming together was nice too. To see that, "Well, we came up with this plan for word study, and that everybody was actively doing that in their classroom. And the kids knew what word study meant in all the classrooms, which was nice. Teacher A

> The teachers [in this grade], we're actually very close, so we almost have lunch together every day, and have lots of conversations going on about the classroom. And seeing where we're at with the pacing guide. And whether or not we fell behind, or weren't able to keep up with what we wanted to do for the year. Because this year we still have a pretty general idea of what we wanted to cover. But we just figure that we should all be on the same page and, you know, really set up sort of a schedule of things that we want to cover and get done, especially for the next grade's teachers, when the kids in my class are not all going to be in the same classroom next year. So next year everyone should have pretty much the same background in whatever they've learned in each grade level. Teacher AA

> I was really nervous going into another teacher's classroom and teaching another person's kids. When you first start teaching in another person's classroom, it can be really scary, but now I'm more comfortable with it. I'm not sure if "comfort" is the right word, but it's almost like when you first start teaching you have your classroom and you have ownership over it, it's totally in your control. And now, it's almost as though there's no 'ownership' of classrooms, because all of the

> classrooms are all of our classrooms, they belong to all of us. It helps that there's so much uniformity across the different [same-grade] classrooms so that if you go into [another teacher's] classroom you'll see a lot of the same routines, if you go into another classroom, you'll see the same routines. It feels like now you can go in there and fit in. We're all talking the same language. If I see the students in Teacher X's classroom, and I say 'I'm going to be conferencing with you', the kids know that I'm going to come over and sit down and talk with them about their book. And, if I ask them to pull out their reading journals, everybody knows what I am talking about." Teacher Y
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> I'm starting to see that we all pretty much approach things similarly. I mean, I've gone into classrooms and I've seen teachers teach, and I get the feeling like yes, that's what I do. And it does, it makes you feel good to know that you know you're on track if you're doing-- If I've seen a teacher do a lesson and everyone says "That's great." It's like well good, because that's what I'm doing back in my room, so I feel comforted that I'm not doing something wrong, or on the wrong track, because it all seems very familiar, what they're doing. Teacher Z
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> Spending shared time with people, looking at the same skills, questions, whatever you call it. And if they're not in your cluster, you barely see them and talk to them. So if you're in the CCL with them, it's nice, it broadens your conversation with them, and gives you a basis for talking about what you're supposed to be doing in your classroom. If you want to further a conversation with a person, you certainly have a basis for talking about mini-lessons or the whole concept. So yes, I think it's opened things up a bit, in addition to instructing us on what we're supposed to know. Teacher W
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> And just the fact that teachers are now communicating a lot more than I think, you know, say two, not last year but the year before, much more so than last year. Everyone sort of did their own thing, and this sort of opens everyone's classroom up, and gets everyone to be on the same page at least. Teacher L

Even teachers with widely disparate levels of experience comment positively about their work in a collaborative, instructionally focused culture.

> And we have been talking a lot with folks about, how's this going, is this good for you, what do you think? In our ILT meetings we talk about CCL a lot, about what it is, how do people feel about it, how does it need to be improved. So there's a lot of discussion around it and making it work. I think new teachers are great indicators of how things are going; they don't come in with a lot of baggage. And we've asked them, in many different ways, is there something – and for new teachers, they love it. It's really an opportunity to get into classrooms and see what people are doing, they love it. Principal B

> They're a really refreshing group to have. And I think a lot of these kids today graduating from college, I think it works out well, the mix we have here. They're able to show us veteran teachers these new ideologies, these new strategies. And I think in turn, we're able to give them some of our expertise on managing the class, on the ability to juggle. So it's a real nice mix. It's something that is certainly needed. The teachers here, the young kids here, we're fortunate. Teacher BB

> I think it's a very good support system for teachers, especially as we all take on and try and learn this new way of teaching. It puts teachers on the same playing field, from new teachers to even veteran teachers because you have a group of young teachers who are learning how to teach, but then you have a group of veteran teachers who are learning how to teach all over again. This workshop instruction is very different than the way I used to teach, but the CCL allows me to read and study along with my colleagues and I'm not segregated just because I have been teaching for a number of years. Teacher Y

> I'm a new teacher, and this was actually a new [instructional] program for me. And so coming in and getting all this training was very beneficial to me. I felt lucky that I could participate. And last year I did quite a few CCLs because I wanted to take advantage of all of them. And they're free, you know, and it's in school, and you work with other colleagues that you can always go down to, and meet up with, and just discuss what's going on. If you found different results in your classroom compared to theirs or, you know, making those comparisons, and sharing stories, getting their support. I think it's helped me become stronger, because it's something that I can reflect upon as I'm doing it myself. So within those cycles, if I was practicing how to confer with students, I can get immediate feedback during the cycle [or the following week], because I was the host class. And I think that's making me a stronger teacher. And feeling comfortable too to ask other teachers to sort of critique or see where I'm at and give me advice as to what I need to do in order to get where I want to be. Teacher AA

Some teachers still have doubts about the efficacy of workshop teaching. But even these teachers, as they participate in more CCL cycles, talk about the benefits of the collaborative work they have been doing.

> Before, everyone was sort of doing their own thing, and now we have a bond and we're all doing the same thing, more or less. So that's a definite positive. I just don't know yet if it's the right way of going, but I like certain things about it, and other things I am not 100% comfortable with yet. So maybe it's too soon for me to evaluate it completely. Maybe give it a year and see how it goes. Teacher U

The collaboration about which teachers speak is far more than teachers getting together to chat. The teachers whose voices we have presented are collaborating around instruction and, in the process, are discovering the value of creating coherence in their work with students. They express the value of coherence when they talk about their own decisions to create curriculum plans and pacing guides, for example. If, as the work of Newmann[28] and his associates in Chicago suggests, program coherence has a considerable association with student achievement, we think that the direction in which these teachers are developing with respect to wanting more coherence in their work with one another, coupled with their growing insights into instruction, represent meaningful impacts from CCL.

Impact 4: Improvements in Instruction

If our data present a convincing case about the increase in teacher collaboration around instruction during Year II of CCL, we still need to address the question of whether, how and to what extent that collaboration is leading to meaningful changes in classroom practice. While we do not have the classroom observation data with which to answer this question, we do have teachers' comments about the links between CCL and their understanding of student learning, in particular. We cannot infer that teachers' thoughts, expressed in their verbal responses to our questions, transfer immediately into improved practice, but we think that their comments reflect a genuine deepening of their understanding of student learning. As such, we present them as evidence of the impact of CCL during Year II. And, we do this reminding readers that the changes in practice demanded by Readers' and Writers' Workshop require changes in teachers' conceptions of themselves as teachers and of their students as learners. When such conceptual changes are required, it is reasonable for them to demonstrate changes in thinking prior to changes in practice.[29]

The changes in thinking about teaching and learning appeared for many of the teachers with whom we spoke as "aha" moments that occurred during the cycle. These moments enabled teachers to gain a deeper understanding of a particular workshop strategy or a clearer sense of what next steps they would need to take in order to work more effectively with a particular student or group of students. The following examples demonstrate the immediate and powerful impact that the CCL has had in these instances, when teachers were able to transfer their collaborative coaching and learning to their own understanding of individual work with students.

Teacher I, for example, in her comments about what she learned from a lab-site, reveals not only what she learned immediately about instruction, but how important it is for the components of CCL to be linked – the lab-site with the inquiry focus. Having had her "aha" moment, Teacher I volunteers that she went back to her professional reading to learn more about what she needed to do next to improve her conferencing skills.

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[28] See Newmann, F.M, Smith, B, Allensworth, E., and Bryk, A.S. (2001) *School Instructional Program Coherence: Benefits and Challenges.* A Report of the Chicago Annenberg Research Project. Consortium on Chicago School Research.

[29] Some coaches report disappointment about the limited extent of transfer of practice that they see when they work with teachers individually. We are not claiming that greater change is occurring than what the coaches see. We are suggesting that changes of mind need to come first and that changes in practice should follow. We do not know, however, when those changes in practice should reasonably appear.

> And one of the things that I noticed about myself [when I was doing the *demonstration lesson on conferencing*] was that my language – it was good, but I needed an effective way to get the children's voice, to get them to answer me a little bit better. Even though it was a conference to show how the kids should behave in a conference, because that's what [the demonstration lesson was supposed to be about], I still got that out of it; that I needed to ask the who, what and how questions to the child, so that I wasn't giving them the answers. ...And then we went back and we read the book that we're reading with the coach [during our inquiry time], and I went back to Chapter 2, which was all conferencing, and just reviewed it a little bit, and worked on my skills a little bit differently. I think that's what the host, I think that's probably one of [the impacts], even though it's nerve wracking, you do critique yourself. Teacher I

Other teachers talked about developing greater sophistication with respect to improvements they had made earlier in their implementation of Workshop. We think it is important to note that it was student feedback that led Teacher J, for example, to realize that she had to improve her classroom library.

> I had my library set up last year. But now, I feel that it isn't really adequate. And until you really get into it and observe and learn from the children's reaction... Now I know that my library is not adequate. ... I think that I need more lower level books and I think that during this workshop I learned more of the philosophy – that you cannot increase students' reading skills simply by giving them harder books to read. It simply does not work that way. You really have to have appropriate material and also the kind of books they are interested in. Teacher J

Other teachers' comments, too, reflect the changes in their thinking and knowledge base as well as changes they report having made in their classrooms that they attribute to participation in CCL cycles.

> Well, something that I've changed, that actually started with last year's CCL is that independent reading has become a much bigger component in my room than it ever used to be. In the past, independent reading was something that they did at home, or for a few minutes stolen here or there during the day. Where now, it's a major part of the reading component, where they read for half an hour, sustained in the classroom. And that was never such a big part of my program in the past as it is now. Teacher Z

> This cycle that we finished taught me a lot. I didn't know anything about this word "schema," but once I started reading and getting into the cycles I got excited about it and I started using it and I'm still using it and it has been very helpful,

very, very helpful. And my kids, that's the word that they use on almost everything in my classroom. Even in math. They apply it to everything they read. And, they get excited and sometimes they stop me when I am doing something and say "Teacher, I'm using my schema here because this and this happened to me or I saw this and that." I don't know, you never stop learning. Teacher E

I have a very quiet student, and I think it was that [another teacher] was just very open with him [in the conference in the lab-site]. I'm not saying that I'm not open, but she was just very social with him. He sort of took to that, and he started talking and responding. And I thought, "Gosh, I should try that." It was almost like [she was] in his face, and it worked. It worked for the conference...I sort of always let him be because I thought he was so shy. So that was a learning experience, for sure. I usually try with shy kids to get them going, but this was one kid that had sort of slipped a little. Time had gone by, and I just sort of let him keep to himself. But then I thought, "Gosh, I could break through to him if I pushed him a little bit." Teacher L

The minute I started to watch [the host teacher] I thought "This makes sense to me now." And it sort of made a connection with all that I had read about, and what I had been reading about, and the sheets that we had gone over. It was just like it was coming together. So it was, in a sense it was a validating experience for me too, during that little ten minute mini-lesson... My mini-lessons, now being shorter, are much more focused. [I know more about] How to zero in on this conferencing, the type of questions to ask, how to break the conferencing down so that I'm not doing too many of them in one day. [I know more about] How to get the children talking about their stories, and from that, making, even suggestions to them of something they might like to think about. It's been wonderful. Teacher R

I think before starting this, there were a lot of things that I took for granted that kids would understand. So it's helped me slow down and say, "Wait a minute. I can see where maybe this is clear to me, but a kid could get tripped up in this. Or I could see why it isn't clear." I guess even with the problem you saw last Thursday. In that problem there was something about the probability that so and so's act [in the play] *immediately* followed [someone else's act]. I realized that they really need to be aware of that word *immediately* to get to the right answer. Whereas in the past I wouldn't have realized to put as much focus on it. Teacher F

I think there's a growing awareness that you don't blame the kids because they're not reading on a grade level. ... I mean, we've talked about that for a long time, but I think until you see a kid make progress, and all of a sudden be comprehending and taking on those comprehensive strategies it's just – you understand why you're doing [the leveled books and the Workshop strategies]... I think that through the conferencing during the reading, we've really gotten to understand where the kids should be, and the importance

> of that, and I feel like if nothing else happens from the CCL, if kids are reading for 30 minutes a day, reading something they can understand, then you know what? We're doing okay. That's a big improvement, getting the kids to take responsibility for their reading and for choosing books that are appropriate for them -- we've just spent a lot of time on that ... And I think in some classrooms, the kids are almost getting individually tutored, just because the teachers are so skillful at helping the kids select books, and at the conferencing. Teacher S

The ultimate impact of CCL and of Workshop must be seen in the quality of work that students produce and the extent to which they are able to meet the standards set by the district and the state. We do not have direct evidence of such impacts on students at this time. Neither do principals, coaches or teachers. But there are intimations of impacts for students. The data we presented above reveal that some teachers are attending to the needs of their students as individuals; they are trying to figure out how to help all students. Workshop instruction, supported by CCL pushes them in that direction.

> There's a lot more attention paid to individual student learners. Some of the teachers seem to have not figured out how to get it down yet, but they value it. They know it needs to be done. So we see that [as an impact of CCL]. Principal D

These findings are important since increasing all students' achievement will depend on attending effectively to all of their learning needs. Therefore, just as we have indicators of changes in teachers that should precede improved instruction, we have indicators of changes in students that suggest an early impact of the Workshop instructional strategies that are supported by CCL.

The evidence for the impact on students comes from principals, coaches and a few teachers who report that students' engagement in learning has increased in the Workshop and CCL environment. Student engagement, they argue, is essential for student learning.[30] Some of the increase in students' engagement, they suggest, comes from the positive light in which students view the fact that teachers are working together to help them learn what they need to know. In other words, according to teachers, principals, and coaches, student engagement has increased as the adults in the schools have developed into communities of learners, communities that include the students.[31]

> From my perspective, where it's been going well is in the engagement of the kids.

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[30] We agree that just as the indicators of teachers' engagement in designing their inquiry and lab-site work is an indicator of the impact of CCL, student engagement should be seen as an impact of teachers' attention to teaching and learning.

[31] For more information about the possible impact of the schools' collaborative culture on students see Bryk, A.S., and Schneider, B. (2002) *Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

> They're totally engaged in the idea that there are a group of adults coming in the room that are interested in this and are asking for their feedback. And, from the perspective of the math teacher, she's seeing the kids in a totally different light. She's actually verbalized that she was amazed at their engagement and what they said [about the math problems]. I think from that perspective, it's exciting.
> Coach A

In one lab-site in our sample, we learned, it was student engagement and excitement with Writers' Workshop that led a group of teachers to reduce their resistance to implementing this instructional strategy and the CCL model.

> [The principal] kind of pushed them to do Writer's Workshop first cycle. And maybe that is again why there was so much more resistance then...[but] the kids got so into the writing, and then the teachers couldn't resist getting into it, because the kids were so into it. I feel like that has been part of the [success of] both the reading and the writing, that the kids liked it. It's hard to say, this doesn't work, when it's working and the kids are liking it. Coach B

It would be encouraging if our findings indicated that the impact of CCL and of Workshop were being transferred immediately and effectively to teachers' daily work and, thereby, to the work their students produce. But, this is not the developmental path of the complex instructional reforms underway in Boston. Therefore, in what is, effectively, only the second full-year of both Workshop and CCL implementation, we need to seek impacts where they can reasonably be found – in teachers' commitment to the professional development in which they are involved, in the increasing value they place on collaborating and reflecting with their colleagues, and in the sophistication which they talk about instruction and its impact on students. With these benchmarks for impact in mind, along with some indications of increased student engagement in their literacy work, we think the data convey genuine progress and impact in Year II of CCL.

FACTORS THAT MATTER/CHALLENGES AHEAD

In the previous sections of this report, we provided a great many examples of how teachers and coaches implemented the components of CCL. We identified what we consider to be indicators of the progress of CCL in Year II, and we raised concerns about the implementation of some aspects of CCL and of Workshop that deserve further attention by the BPE and BPS. The purpose of this analysis and presentation was to provide readers with a clear idea of what CCL looked like, how those involved thought about what they were doing, and the impact of CCL on teachers' thinking as well as practice.

Now, in this final section of the report, we take a step back from the detailed examples and pose three important questions for the BPE and the BPS to consider as they move forward in implementing CCL across all schools.

- What do principals do to support CCL implementation?
- How does the extent of teachers' knowledge of Workshop influence their involvement with CCL?
- What challenges lie ahead?

We pose the first question, "What do principals do to support CCL implementation?" because it is important for readers to understand that despite the fact that principals do not have a prominent place in our descriptions of CCL inquiry and lab-sites this does not mean that principals are no longer important to the advancement of CCL as school-based professional development. Rather, they remain essential to this effort.

The second question, "How does the extent of teachers knowledge of Workshop influence their involvement with CCL?" is intended to address the issue of teachers' reluctance to host lab-sites. In discussing this issue in earlier sections of the report, we presented some data suggesting that these teachers were uncomfortable with demonstrating teaching strategies with which they were unfamiliar. We want to explore the circumstances that may have led teachers to feel inadequately prepared for CCL work. And, we want to briefly note other factors that may explain some teachers' resistance.

We raise the third question, "What challenges lie ahead?" to suggest issues that need to be considered in further supporting CCL implementation because we believe that additional thought and planning will be required if CCL is to become an institutionalized, sustainable, standard operating system for professional development in Boston's schools.

1. What do principals and coaches do to support CCL implementation? We begin to answer this question by examining the principals' role in implementing CCL. As in Year I, principals (along with assistant principals and directors of instruction) varied in the amount of time they participated in CCL cycles with their teachers.[32] However, without exception, they attended to the scheduling, composition, and focus of the CCL groups, kept up with the work as it unfolded over the eight weeks, and participated as a group member when their participation seemed germane to the goals of the group.

How did the principals enact these roles? For one thing, because they no longer had to struggle with schedules and did not need to entice teachers into participating, **in Year II, principals were able to think carefully about the order in which the CCL cycles would be scheduled across the school year to maximize their benefits to teachers and students.** Principal D described the factors that influenced the order of the cycles in her school and noted the importance of timing certain courses of study during particular parts of the school year.

> It's a combination of two things: what the teachers would like to focus on, and

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[32] In Year II, as in Year I, some principals attended most of the CCL sessions in their schools while others attended selectively or not at all.

> whether it would make sense to do it at the beginning of the year or if they can wait and do it a little later. For example, two groups wanted to launch Writers' Workshop. When you're launching something, it's better to do it at the beginning of the year. Also, one of the groups did not have to do the math training at the beginning of the year, because they did it in other forums. So that alleviated some of the pressure on them and they did not have to do both [professional developments] at the same time. Another group felt pretty established in Readers' Workshop, so they wanted to focus more in depth on one particular area, word study. It wasn't that crucial to do it in the beginning. Principal D

As a result of these strategic scheduling decisions, CCL became an increasingly well integrated part of schools' professional development plans. Some teachers remarked on the increased coherence of their school-based professional development, noting how specific cycles reflected their schools' whole-school improvement objectives and/or students' most critical needs as identified by the ILT and/or LASW groups during their data analysis efforts. Principals' ability to coordinate these activities so that teachers were made keenly aware of the purpose of their professional development and how that professional development related to the schools' whole-school improvement agenda, helped make the CCL a meaningful and often productive learning opportunity for many of the teachers in our sample.

In addition, in Year II, principals made tactical decisions about how to allocate their time to the CCL groups. Usually, principals participated with groups that might not have made progress without the implicit accountability provided by the principal's attendance. Although all CCL groups were comprised only of teachers who agreed to participate, some groups included several teachers who had not had much Workshop professional development and/or were not convinced that CCL would be valuable to them. Groups with these characteristics tended to be found at the upper elementary grades. Principals participated with these CCL groups in order to ensure a) that the groups stayed on task, and b) that they had a worthwhile experience that would enhance their knowledge and skill with CCL and Workshop strategies.

> I was part of the first CCL. ...I particularly thought I should be part of it because of some teachers who were in the group. We thought there might be potential problems there because I would say it was the group that had the teachers that were more resistant to CCL. Principal A

> I did the one with [an upper] grade. I needed to be there to make sure it happened. With all the other ones, I've come to pop in and out, but with that [upper] grade group, it's almost like I was a full member. I was in the discussion. I did the reading, and I asked questions. There are certain questions the teachers have that they won't ask, and I ended up asking those questions [of the coach], just to get them out there. Questions like: if you have 25 students, how do you monitor 25 students? When you do this conferencing, how do you get to everybody? The teachers are so afraid of losing somebody, so it comes back to a management issue. And it's not that easy to do. If I'm there, people take it more seriously.

> ...There's another group that couldn't care less if I was there or not. They just continued doing their thing. It's their thing and the coach is more of a consultant to them. They know exactly what they want, and they'll ask her questions when they're doing it. They are at a different level. Principal D

Principals' increased savvy around encouraging and then sustaining teachers' participation in CCL allowed many cycles to flourish in Year II. Coaches in our sample were grateful for this kind of principal support and believed that the principals' presence in certain CCL groups made a positive impact on teachers' learning. Furthermore, these coaches noted the impact the principals' presence made on their own work.

> I don't know, I mean I don't think I could have done it without her there. Honestly. ...Every other group of people I worked with, people questioned what they were doing, they questioned it very respectfully and I like that... This was more like a little more over the edge, and if she hadn't been there, I wouldn't have, I don't think I could have continued... And I think the principal knew that, and that is why she came. Coach B

In our Year I report we noted the potential for coaches to burnout from this kind of intense, collaborative work with teachers. Now in Year II, Education Matters can see that principals' willingness to take on more active roles during difficult cycles helps sustain coaches in this complex work.

In Year II, as in Year I, principals strove to ensure that the members of each CCL group would work collaboratively and, therefore, benefit from CCL as a joint learning process as well as from the study of specific content. Toward this end and when necessary, principals shaped CCL groups so that they included, for example, a minimum number of resistant teachers. They learned during Year I that such teachers, even if they voluntarily agreed to participate in a cycle, might be detrimental to a group's inquiry and lab-site work. In some cases, principals feared that such teachers' attitudes might even create a negative climate for CCL at the grade- or whole-school level. Therefore, principals gave careful thought to whether and how to include resistant teachers in CCL groups, as this principal reports.

> What I've learned is that you can't have a group of nay-sayers together. You can't just say, these people are all [the same subject or the same grade-level] people, so they need to be in this cycle. Some of them have the same [difficult] personality, and that's where you have to identify a different personality that can counter that personality. We've done a lot of that. Principal E

At the same time, principals knew that they could not simply ignore or set aside the teachers who resisted the coaching model and/or Workshop. Therefore, while they tried to ensure compatibility in CCL groups, **principals looked for ways to encourage positive participation from resistant teachers.**

In this vein, one principal talked about the danger of leaving resistance unchecked and described the negative impact that some group dynamics can produce. In one situation, she described, most of the teachers in the CCL group were willing to participate in the lab-sites even though they had some reservations about it; a few of these teachers had even agreed to host a lesson despite their anxiety about teaching in front of their colleagues. But, when these teachers agreed to demonstrate, a small number of other teachers in the group tried to get them to change their minds, as Principal C describes below. In this instance, the principal's role was to try and defuse the situation, reminding teachers that their decision to participate in the CCL was voluntary, while at the same time, encouraging them to take on the new and challenging work.

> [Another teacher] challenged teachers who were willing to take the initiative and [host]. What I had to do was go over to the teachers [who agreed to host] and say, "Look, I cannot force you to take this role. You're extremely qualified; you do a wonderful job in the classroom. My expectation is that you'll do it." And three of them signed up to do it. It was kind of a touchy issue, but yet I felt like this was what we needed to do. And I think they wanted to do it, but there's outside pressure [not to participate, from other teachers]. Principal C

Even when challenges such as these arose, principals encouraged broad teacher participation. They wanted their teachers to participate, as Principal B notes, not only to ensure more successful CCL groups, but to ensure that Boston's whole-school improvement agenda actually involved "whole-schools."

> Obviously there are multiple purposes here [with CCL]. One is that teachers increase their own individual capacity and they take it back to their classroom or wherever they go. But part of it is to help transform a school, to help a school move as a school. So, if you only have the teachers who want to be influenced participate, and the other people never participate, that's not good. But there are ways of having other people who don't want to do it initially participate, if you come up with some ways of getting them engaged. And yes, it might be that you have a CCL where not as many demonstrations are done, initially, but you get people hooked on it, and the next time around they take the next step. Principal B

Principals made other decisions about creating CCL groups in light of their assessment of the long-term benefits that would accrue to the school depending on who participated. In addition to determining the set of personalities that are in a CCL group, it was important for principals to consider how much longer a teacher would be in the school when allocating scarce CCL resources. Given such a calculus, as Principal C notes, they tended to expend their CCL coaching resources on those who were newer to the profession and, therefore, likely to remain longer.

> I guess it's looking at your challenges. If I have one coach and a team of seven, where do I really want to focus [the coach's efforts]? I want to focus on my three or four new teachers who are going to be working with kids for the next ten to

> fifteen years and are now open and receptive to this model of teaching because they have no history with anything else.... So what I've done is say to the coach, "These are the five people I really need you to work with. I will deal with these two." I think as an administrator you've got to make those decisions, because you can spread your coach too thin and never accomplish what you want to do. Principal C

The principal of another school made similar comments about how she thinks about using the school's available coaching resources in light of teachers' needs.

> We do a sort of needs assessment based on where the school's going. So, we had a number of new teachers this year, and we really felt they needed the Writers' Workshop simultaneously with the Readers' Workshop. So, we focused on the Readers' Workshop initially, to make sure the new teachers got involved in that, and later on we had a Writers' Workshop CCL. Principal E

These efforts, on the part of principals, reflect a deep understanding about how to use their schools' available resources to meet their long-term goals. The level of thoughtful, detailed planning that goes into each cycle is critical for maximizing teachers opportunities to learn from the coach and from each other. Much of this responsibility fell to principals.

Once the cycles were underway, principals met regularly as well as on an ad hoc basis with coaches to find out how the work was going, identify problems, if necessary, and support the coach in implementing the CCL model. For example, one principal told us about a situation in which teachers were not taking advantage of the coach's offer to help them individually. The coach had posted a sign-up sheet, but it remained blank. The principal suggested that the coach, who was new to the school in the 2002-2003 school year, approach the teachers personally to develop a relationship that would then enable teachers to seek the coach's help. Another principal described an instance in which she learned that teachers were not coming to the lab-site groups prepared to do their demonstration lessons in part because they were afraid of hosting a weak lesson. In response, this principal met with her coach and assistant principal and collaboratively they developed a formal process in which the coach and a teacher would prepare together for the demonstration lesson and, at times, co-teach it. When planning was done in this way, the coach and teacher shared responsibility for the outcome of the demonstration and teachers became more willing to host/co-host lab-sites.

> Doing [the demonstration lesson] with the coach made it seem like it was okay to do it and then talk about it. Because if the coach puts herself out there, then I would too [that's what the teachers think]. The coach says, "Oh, that didn't go very well", or "I wish I did this better" and once she does that, [it's okay for everyone.] Then, once you've set that kind of tone where it's okay to say, "I don't know how to do that. How can I possibly know all this stuff?" Then we can say, "How can we help?" Principal A

Principal A's description of what was involved in making teachers feel comfortable enough to a) try what they did not yet know how to do well, and b) ask for help, suggested **yet another important role that principals assumed in Year II: creating a safe climate for collaborative teacher practice.**

As we have described, principals had essential roles in creating a schedule for lab-sites (and creating school schedules that provided teachers with time for the CCL work), monitoring the composition and content focus of the groups, keeping track of their progress, and stepping-in when help was needed. Principals were engaged with CCL as facilitators, advisors, and when necessary, as "nudgers" who could persuade teachers to take a chance and host a lab-site. They helped establish the school culture in which CCL could continue to flourish in Year II. As such, although they do not appear in the data we present about inquiry groups or lab-sites, their role remains essential. CCL would not thrive were principals to stop supporting it in all of these ways.

2. How does the extent of teachers' knowledge of Workshop influence their involvement with CCL? In the implementation section of this report, we described the challenges that arose when teachers did not want to demonstrate in front of colleagues and coaches. And, we reported that most teachers attributed their reluctance to their limited knowledge of Workshop instruction.

How is it that teachers could know so little about Workshop two years into its implementation? We think that part of the explanation can be found in a) the way in which literacy reforms were rolled-out, and b) the cohort approach to scaling-up reform to all of the district's schools.[33] Early in the district's whole-school improvement work, schools chose a literacy program and began to engage in the professional development that accompanied it. Most of these programs, perhaps with the exception of Success for All, at the elementary level had a great deal in common with the Workshop approach. However, teachers had to adapt what they learned in their literacy program when the district chose to adopt Readers' and Writers' Workshop for all schools two years ago. Teachers in our sample who had been in Cohort I schools, were fully trained in their school's chosen literacy model, and who were for the most part teaching in the primary grades, seemed to have made the transition to Workshop with reasonable ease.[34] Their upper grade colleagues, however, were more reluctant to engage with Workshop. In many instances, these were the teachers who did not wish to demonstrate during CCL. In reality, they had just begun the work of learning their school's literacy program and did not yet know it well when they were thrust into situations in which they were to use a seemingly different set of strategies. Not having fully learned the original program, they had difficulty drawing on the similarities between the approaches. It was as if they were starting to learn to teach anew all over again.

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[33] In developing this hypothesis, we do not suggest in any way that the district's approach could have been better given a) the complexity and scale of the whole-school improvement approach and b) the need to assess and redesign the reforms as they were being developed. It is only in hindsight that we can see some of the challenges that developed out of Boston's scale-up strategy.

[34] Most program developers created their upper grade programs several years into their work in Boston. As a result, even Cohort I upper elementary teachers did not begin to participate in literacy professional development until several years after their primary grade colleagues.

Teachers in schools that began their literacy professional development as part of later cohorts, whether at the primary or upper elementary level, had completed much less of their literacy program professional development than had teachers at Cohort I schools. Teachers at the upper elementary levels in these schools had barely begun to learn their school's new literacy strategies. Then, in what seemed like an arbitrary change of focus, they were asked to adopt another approach to literacy, Readers' and Writers' Workshop. The teachers who said that they did not know what Workshop was or looked like came from schools that began their instructional reform in the district's later cohorts. We think, in other words, that the organizational approach to Boston's reform, has a relationship to teachers' reluctance to engage in parts of CCL and bolsters their claim that they do not know how to do the instructional work associated with Workshop.

We think this explanation of the interaction of a school's cohort membership and the development of the literacy programs themselves, can also inform our understanding of what appears to be considerable resistance among upper elementary and middle school teachers. Again, regardless of cohort, teachers at these levels had less literacy-focused professional development than did their primary grade colleagues.

Put in a more positive perspective, those teachers who had been well-trained in LC, for example, seem to have more quickly been able to see how those strategies fit with Workshop. They seem to have been more confident in their ability to make the transition from LC to Workshop and CCL.

This analysis does not explain every teacher's reluctance to host a lab-site. Some teachers did not think that CCL was a good way for them to learn and others simply did not want to do the work required by CCL and by Workshop. But, we think the analysis is worth considering because it helps explain what our data revealed: Teachers who were more reluctant to fully participate in lab-site work were those who taught in later cohort schools and/or taught upper elementary or middle school grades.

If this is a plausible explanation for the challenges to lab-sites in our sample of schools, what should be done to address it? We cannot fully answer this question for the BPE or for the BPS, however, it might be worth considering how to provide teachers who are not knowledgeable about their school's initial literacy program or Workshop with opportunities to gain a complete overview of what Workshop is, how it gets implemented, and why it is a suitable approach for just about all students. In creating such an overview, we think it would be extremely helpful to provide teachers with opportunities to see what Workshop looks like in practice. For those teachers who have not seen examples of skillful mini-lessons or conferences, this would provide them with images of what they should be trying to accomplish. However, we do not suggest that teachers can learn all that they need to know about implementing Workshop by observing others teach it. We make this suggestion as a way to quickly help teachers get a better grasp of the literacy strategies so that they can begin to approximate them with their students and in their

CCL lab-sites.

In fact, if the idea of returning to the big picture, the theoretical framework and implementation strategies, is attractive to the district, then it may be worthwhile to consider preparing overview materials including video exemplars for all teachers. Because, as Principal D notes, many teachers who are progressing with the implementation of CCL and Workshop may now need a review of the underlying theory that guides the classroom strategies.

> It took so long for people to realize that they don't quite understand. Some people did, but a lot of teachers do not have a good grasp of the theoretical reasoning, why you're doing this in Writers' Workshop. That whole notion of working independently with stamina is only now becoming more clear so we can focus on how to do that. So they're taking this long because, I think, the way that we rolled out Readers' and Writers' Workshop to teachers in the district was all piecemeal. They really need to have that theoretical framework. In the six weeks' intervention [of Year I], how much [of the theoretical framework] are you going to get? Now, as people go into the different, more in-depth work, we've found that because they didn't understand the theoretical framework behind it, we have people asking questions or getting frustrated. So in some ways we're backtracking, but it's filling in those holes. I'm seeing people asking more questions, and it's like, aha, this is what [this means] – and it became clear to them that unless your classroom management structure is very tight, you can't do this. It's not this whole notion of free-for-all. Principal D

Before leaving the topic of teacher knowledge and how it may be influencing the implementation of CCL, we want to reiterate why it is vital to address this issue. With respect to teacher knowledge, if there are very few teachers in a lab-site group who feel that they know what they are doing and are confident about demonstrating in front of their peers, or, if there are a number of such groups in a school, then it may be difficult for the lab-site group and/or the school to make real progress using the CCL model. Lab-site groups need at least a few teachers who are knowledgeable and a bit bold to help spearhead the work that must take place if this approach to professional development is to succeed. They need the intellectual capital that such teachers can provide. Therefore, it may be important for the BPE and BPS to work with schools to identify teachers who can take on this kind of leadership role in each of the CCL groups. However, we want to caution against creating CCL groups in which one teacher does all of the demonstrations. This situation occurred during Year I and led to considerable teacher burnout with respect to further participation in CCL.

In light of teachers' need for additional knowledge of Workshop, we know that the BPS has made it possible for teachers to sign-up for high quality, Workshop-focused professional development. Certainly, individual teachers can benefit from such learning opportunities. Nonetheless, Education Matters' studies of CCL in both EP and other BPS schools lead us to strongly recommend that the district offer such professional development opportunities primarily to teachers who come as part of a school-based team. We recommend this precisely because effective implementation of CCL depends on groups of teachers having enough shared instructional knowledge that they can effectively work together in a cycle. If only individuals enrol in the district-provided Workshop professional development, there is no guarantee that the sum of the individual participants' knowledge and skill will increase schools' capacities. Our study of CCL leads us to conclude that improving instruction depends on organizing professional development so that it strengthens groups of teachers who then work together, collaboratively, to improve instruction. This is the understanding on which CCL is built. Therefore, we think that the district would do well to organize Workshop-related professional development opportunities so that they contribute to the development of schools' instructional capacity as well as to the capacity of individual teachers.

With respect to the provision of additional professional development we want to raise one other caution. We have heard teachers talk about being "trained" or "untrained" in Readers' and Writers' Workshop as if their status explained everything else about their use of Workshop strategies. Teachers who were "untrained" did not want to demonstrate in front of their peers; those who were "trained" wondered why, since they were "trained," they needed to spend time engaged in CCL. Teachers who expressed these ideas had not, it seemed, adopted a continuous learning perspective on their own professional development. Hopefully, the continued implementation of CCL will help shift teachers' views of professional development from one of all or nothing, trained or untrained, to one of continuous learning.

In this context, we want to be sure that our suggestion to prepare additional ways for teachers to learn about Workshop does not imply that such professional development would leave them "trained." Rather, we think such learning opportunities may provide teachers with sufficient knowledge that they become confident enough to a) start asking questions about elements of Workshop that they do not understand, b) more actively participate in CCL and c) begin to incorporate more aspects of Workshop instruction into their daily routines.

3. What challenges lie ahead? Throughout the implementation section of this report, we pointed out areas of CCL and Workshop implementation that needed further attention. We return to them now because progress with these issues in Year III would be a powerful demonstration of the potential for CCL to influence teacher learning and teacher practice in significant ways. We present these issues as the next set of challenges that face the BPE and BPS.

How can the BPE and BPS help teachers understand that they can learn by actively attempting to teach using practices that are quite new to them, practices that they cannot yet implement effectively? While we agree that teachers need to know more about Workshop in order to feel confident in hosting lab-sites, we also know that teachers need to practice Workshop strategies in order to get better at them. In the past, given a traditional conception of professional development, teachers would have been brought together to hear about Workshop and then they would have attempted the strategies in the isolation of their rooms – if they tried them at all. They would have been left to their own devices to figure out what to do if the strategies did not work well. Now, that the BPE and the BPS operate with a more complex and appropriate conception of professional development, teachers have exceptional opportunities in which they can practice under the watchful eye of a coach and the sympathetic eyes of their colleagues who are learning alongside them. Yet, teachers are often afraid to take on the work for fear of looking bad in front of their colleagues. This fear stands in the way of their learning.

The challenge for the BPE and BPS is to figure out how to convince teachers that they cannot learn to teach without practicing their teaching and that it is far more beneficial to practice in the company of others. We are sure that teachers understand that they could never learn to ice skate by watching people skate. There are things to be learned from watching, but ultimately, one must stand on the ice, fall in front of others, get some advice on next steps, and try it again. The same process holds for learning to teach in new ways and in learning to improve extant practices. Too many teachers, we think, are not yet convinced that they will emotionally survive a fall or two. The challenge is to convince them to stand up and try.[35]

How can the BPE help coaches learn how to use even novice examples of teaching in a lab-site as opportunities for teachers to learn? This challenge for coaches is directly related to the one above. If teachers are persuaded to demonstrate when they are just learning, their lessons will likely seem weak. Coaches will need to learn how and what to select from such demonstrations for further discussion in debrief sessions, for example, so that all teachers will find that the observations contribute to their learning. Coaches will need opportunities to practice addressing the difficult and sensitive issue of what to do with weak demonstration lessons. One way to make this kind of professional development available to coaches would be to provide them with videotaped examples of lessons in need of substantial improvement that coaches could then watch together, role play the debrief conversations and get feedback on this work in the safety of coach professional development sessions. This kind of shared, hands-on coaching experience, which would be appropriately in the spirit of CCL, would provide coaches with the opportunity to engage collaboratively in the real and immediate challenges associated with their work. We think that coaches could benefit from this kind of professional development throughout the school year.

What has to happen to enable teachers to better link the components of Workshop instruction? The difficulty of linking the various components of Workshop instruction together came up in nearly all of the lab-sites that Education Matters observed in the 2002-2003 school year. New and veteran teachers alike struggled with this issue and as noted in earlier examples, coaches, too, struggled to find ways to alert teachers to this problem and to help them improve their instruction so that the components of Workshop teaching would all center around a specific instructional strategy. We believe that this issue is pervasive enough to warrant further attention from schools and from the BPE and BPS.

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[35] A small number of teachers in our sample claim that they can learn all they need to know by reading a book or teacher guide and watching a video. They report that their time is wasted when they watch others learn to teach. These teachers, too, pose a challenge, but their numbers are small. We think priority attention should be given to teachers who resist engaging in CCL kinds of learning opportunities because they are afraid to look foolish.

In practical terms, this challenge needs to be addressed by coaches as well as others who organize professional development for teachers. Coaches (and the principals and teachers they work with) may want to consider the development of specific cycles dedicated to helping teachers understand the links between the various components of Workshop instruction. Stressing the importance of making these links explicit could be an important part of coaches' role in helping teachers plan their weekly lab-site demonstrations. And, as noted previously in this section, district-sponsored professional development focused on the theory undergirding Workshop instruction may also help teachers' piece together their extant knowledge of literacy instruction and give them a better sense of the "big picture" of Readers' and Writers' Workshop.

The BPE and BPS may also want to consider addressing this issue in the support provided to coaches and principals. For example, coaches might benefit from some professional development that allows them to practice ways in which to raise this issue in a CCL setting and to work with teachers on increasing the coherence of their Workshop instruction throughout the cycle. Principals, too, might benefit from professional development around this issue, with specific attention paid to what indicators they should look for during classroom observations and what strategies they should use to help teachers who are struggling to connect the components of Workshop in their classrooms. This of course, highlights the necessity for collaboration between the various professional development providers at both the school and district level

How can the BPE help coaches and teachers create productive, in-depth, non-threatening debrief discussions? As we described in earlier parts of this report, the debriefs following the lab-site demonstrations tend to be superficial and flattering regardless of the quality of the demonstration. Coaches, in particular, are frustrated by this situation. Yet, they remain silent during the debriefs because they fear raising sensitive issues lest teachers withdraw their interest in CCL. To make this point again, we return to Coach B's comment noted earlier in this report and we add the comment of one of her colleagues.

> For me, that is the hardest part about CCL, is that what I really want to say is "That's not really Writer's Workshop" but I don't want to embarrass her, and I don't really want to say that, and I do want to give her credit for what she's tried. And that is a very hard part of all of this. Then I don't want the other teachers to hear that and think "Oh, I could do that too [when it is not Workshop]." And that's a hard situation to be in. Coach B
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> I felt like we never circled back to the teaching point from this mini-lesson. I tried very casually to say it; I didn't want her to feel that she hadn't done a great job. Because she is the first one to step forward. But also, my job is to also push her in her thinking, and so I had to say that; I had to, you know. But, I don't know if she got it, or if the others got it, though I know [the principal] did. Coach D

This is a difficult issue to resolve, in part because the work of collaborative coaching and learning is so new. Teachers and coaches may simply need more time to develop a method of discourse that will allow them to address instructional issues with one another. As we have noted throughout this report, individuals' sense of comfort and confidence has proven to be essential during this stage of implementation. But time alone, will not improve the quality of debriefing discussions. Coaches will need to learn how to foster more professional, and when necessary critical, conversations among teachers, and they will need to learn to find ways to start, and later facilitate, these conversations without compromising their relationships with teachers.

The development of hands-on professional development activities for coaches may again be appropriate to increase their knowledge and skill in this regard. Perhaps, there are examples within Boston (preferably videotaped) of high and low quality debriefing discussions that coaches could examine for the purpose of increasing their own facilitation skills. Or, Boston may be able to learn from other districts in which teachers and school leaders are trying to have similar conversations, focused around instructional practices.

Education Matters is not sure which of these strategies will ultimately lead to the best outcome, but we have evidence that productive debriefs are possible. First, we presented data earlier about how a coach and teacher collaboratively designed and taught a lab-site lesson. The coach and teacher's joint production of and shared responsibility for the lesson enabled the teacher to "take a chance" on hosting, and made it possible for the debrief to actually focus on the lesson because the coach had some responsibility for how it went.

Second, in our Year I report on the scale-up of CCL, a school we called Baker Elementary decided to implement CCL in the 2002-2003 school year, but made an important adaptation to the design of the CCL model: **teachers in the cycle collectively planned each demonstration lesson, and then took turns executing these lessons in their own classrooms**.[36] Our data suggest that teachers' collective investment in planning the demonstration lessons is what allowed them to discuss the lab-sites quite candidly during the debriefs because the outcome of the lesson was not seen as the product of one individual's instruction, but rather as a result of the group's planning process. Much of this planning occurred during the group's inquiry time and according to teachers, was a genuinely collaborative process. Furthermore the coach reported that the debriefs were having a positive impact on teachers' understanding of Workshop instruction.

These collaborative approaches to planning demonstration lessons may be worth further investigation by the BPE. There may also be other debriefing strategies that schools are using/developing and finding effective. Collecting and sharing this information across schools will likely be an important contribution to the continued, successful implementation of CCL.

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[36] For more information on this example see *Year I of CCL in the BPS: Accounts from the Schools*, July 2003. In this report we have given each school in the sample a fictitious name that in no way resembles the actual name of the school.

How can the BPE ensure that high quality professional development in the middle and high schools does not become something available only to ELA and math teachers? Because of the focus on literacy and math, a great many teachers remain outside of the changing collaborative, instructionally focused culture of Boston's secondary schools. There are principals who recognize the potential marginalization of certain subjects and teachers if the district does not expend some energy on developing ways in which all teachers are part of whole-school improvement. These principals have gone to great lengths to include content-area teachers in CCL cycles and to distribute their coaching resources more broadly across the schools' staff. As the following principal explains, good instructional strategies can cut across content areas.

> I think one of the issues for us is that I don't think it's very useful for us to have something going on where only a few people in a school [are involved]. And actually we have a CCL going on right now with people who tend to feel marginalized... And in having a lot of discussions with our coach this year, we talked a lot about how a lot of Readers' and Writers' Workshop is about thinking. You're modeling what good readers do, and you expose the way a good reader is always rereading, for example. So you model that for the kids, the kids learn the strategies that will sustain them, and they can be good readers, because that's what good readers do. And that's about thinking. It's really not something that only applies to one particular subject area, it applies to good instruction. Principal B

Despite many of the commonalities associated with Workshop instruction across content areas, principals and coaches need to pay special attention to how and when to include these teachers in CCL cycles. Some schools have attempted to mix teachers from other subjects in cycles with ELA and/or math teachers.[37] Others have developed cycles in which these teachers remain separate from their ELA and math colleagues.[38] While there are likely merits (and challenges) to each approach, the BPE may want to consider how schools are addressing this issue to determine if there are in fact, a set of strategies for how best to include content area teachers in the CCL.

CONCLUSION

Education Matters' analysis leads us to conclude that the issues the BPE identified as being important at the end of Year I of CCL implementation remained important throughout Year II – deepening teachers' ability to reflect on their work, tightening the links between components of

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[37] This approach presented some challenges for teachers who observed demonstration lessons in classes outside their designated subject areas. For example, some teachers reported having difficulty transferring what they learned in a theater class to their ELA instruction and vice versa.

[38] Coaches, well-versed in literacy focused Workshop instruction, sometimes expressed difficulty applying their knowledge and skill to classes outside of ELA.

Workshop and CCL, clarifying the expectations about teachers' participation in the cycle and increasing teachers' ownership of the work. The BPE's and the schools' efforts to address these issues met with some success during the 2002-2003 school year, particularly with regards to increasing teachers' ownership of their professional development work and the deepening of teachers' reflection about their practice in the context of inquiry time. This is no small accomplishment for a pilot program that is only in its second year of implementation.

Our data lead us to conclude that the EP schools in our sample made significant progress in Year II of CCL implementation. While many challenges still lie ahead for the teachers, coaches and principals engaged in this work, Education Matters remains confident that the model is a promising one for teacher professional development and is worth the considerable effort the EP schools have devoted to this work in the last two years.

Therefore, at the end of this lengthy report, we want to reiterate the major findings of this study.

- First, without question, teachers in the second year of CCL implementation had a greater voice in determining the focus of the cycle's work than they had during the first year. As a result, at least some teachers in these cycles truly took ownership of their learning. They not only identified the focus of their CCL cycle but used what they learned during a cycle to identify the focus of subsequent cycles. Such teachers expressed the opinion that the fundamental work of reflecting on practice should be a part of every teacher's ongoing professional development.

- Second, we saw progress with respect to the deepening of teachers' ability to reflect on their own and each other's work. In some instances, this deepening was profound, as we described. In others, although the change might be considered small were there a rubric with which to assess it, in our view these small changes were significant – teachers who had been unwilling to talk with colleagues about instruction were now actively participating in discussions about how to go about teaching a specific reading strategy, for example. In almost all cases, the evidence for deeper reflection appeared during inquiry sessions rather than during debriefs. For the most part, debriefs continued to be sessions in which teachers gave and received positive feedback on their work. Coaches reported that they still found it difficult to provide thought-provoking feedback to teachers during debriefs because they feared alienating teachers by appearing to be evaluating their work.

- Third, the findings are mixed with respect to the extent to which teachers were willing to take on the responsibility for demonstrating during their cycles. All but a few of the teachers who had been willing to host during Year I continued to value and participate in this component of their cycle's work. In three of the lab-sites we observed, teachers who had been unwilling to host in Year I were persuaded to take on this role in Year II. In only one of these cycles, however, did teachers report that demonstrating was a valuable experience. Strong resistance to demonstrating continued in a couple of lab-sites despite the coaches' and principals' best efforts to encourage teachers to take on this work.

- Fourth, as a result of principals' and teachers' efforts, and as a result of the increased coaching support provided to large schools, many more teachers participated in cycles during Year II. Indeed, by the end of the 2002-2003 school year, almost all classroom teachers in the elementary schools and ELA teachers in the middle schools had participated in one or more cycles. However, with many more teachers participating in cycles in Year II, the issue of teacher resistance became increasingly difficult to avoid. Teachers who were able to avoid CCL participation in Year I were encouraged by principals, coaches, and in some cases peers, to participate in Year II. Many of these individuals, who had to be strongly persuaded to participate in a cycle, continued to question the fundamental premises of the CCL model before, during, and after their participation in the cycle. Participation, direct experience with CCL in other words, did not always lead to commitment to the coaching model. On the other hand, some of the teachers who participated in CCL in Year II because more cycles were available to the school a) were willing to take on the role of demonstrating teacher and b) found the experience rewarding.

- Fifth, there was **only slight** improvement in the links between a) the parts of Workshop teaching as they were modeled during the lab-site, and b) the components of the CCL model itself as demonstrated in the eight lab-sites we observed. The BPE and the coaches made efforts to better connect the parts of both Workshop and CCL, but in most schools, during most cycles, according to coaches and Education Matters' observations, the parts remained unconnected or only loosely connected.

The goal of Boston's whole-school reform agenda is of course, improved instruction and thereby, increased student achievement. The CCL cannot yet be credited with producing these outcomes, and indeed, measuring the contribution of CCL in this regard will prove difficult for the BPE even in later stages of implementation. But, given everything we know to date about adult learning, coaching and instructional change, we believe that the CCL has the potential to help forward Boston's whole-school reform agenda and, as is already the case in our sample schools, make a positive impact on participants with varying levels of experience and knowledge and skill.

Changing the organization of schools so that they become instructionally focused collaborative cultures takes time and considerable resources even in schools such as those designated as EP that have strong, instructional leaders as principals and a cadre of teachers who want to make the necessary changes. For those who worry that progress in changing the professional culture and quality of instruction in the district's schools is moving too slowly, we offer this reminder: At the end of the first year of implementing the 21st Century Schools program in a group of twenty-seven schools that would become Cohort I of the district's overall reform strategy, the BPE was disappointed to learn that it would need to keep the whole-school change coaches in place for at least another year. What it called the "first year essentials," it turned out, could not be implemented in one year. Indeed, even with the great progress made by the EP schools, many still value the presence of what are now called "capacity" coaches.

Perhaps the work of implementing the CCL could move more quickly and, for the sake of the children, it should move more quickly. But, it is also important to keep in mind that the EP schools and the BPE are in the forefront of the effort to change their instructional cultures and implement the CCL coaching model. They are doing the work of research, development and implementation of CCL. As a result of their work, they are making progress. And, from what is learned from their pioneering efforts, the rest of the BPS schools may be able to move forward with implementing CCL so that instructional improvement occurs more rapidly across all of Boston's schools.

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